UNESCO COURIER

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

JANUARY 1955

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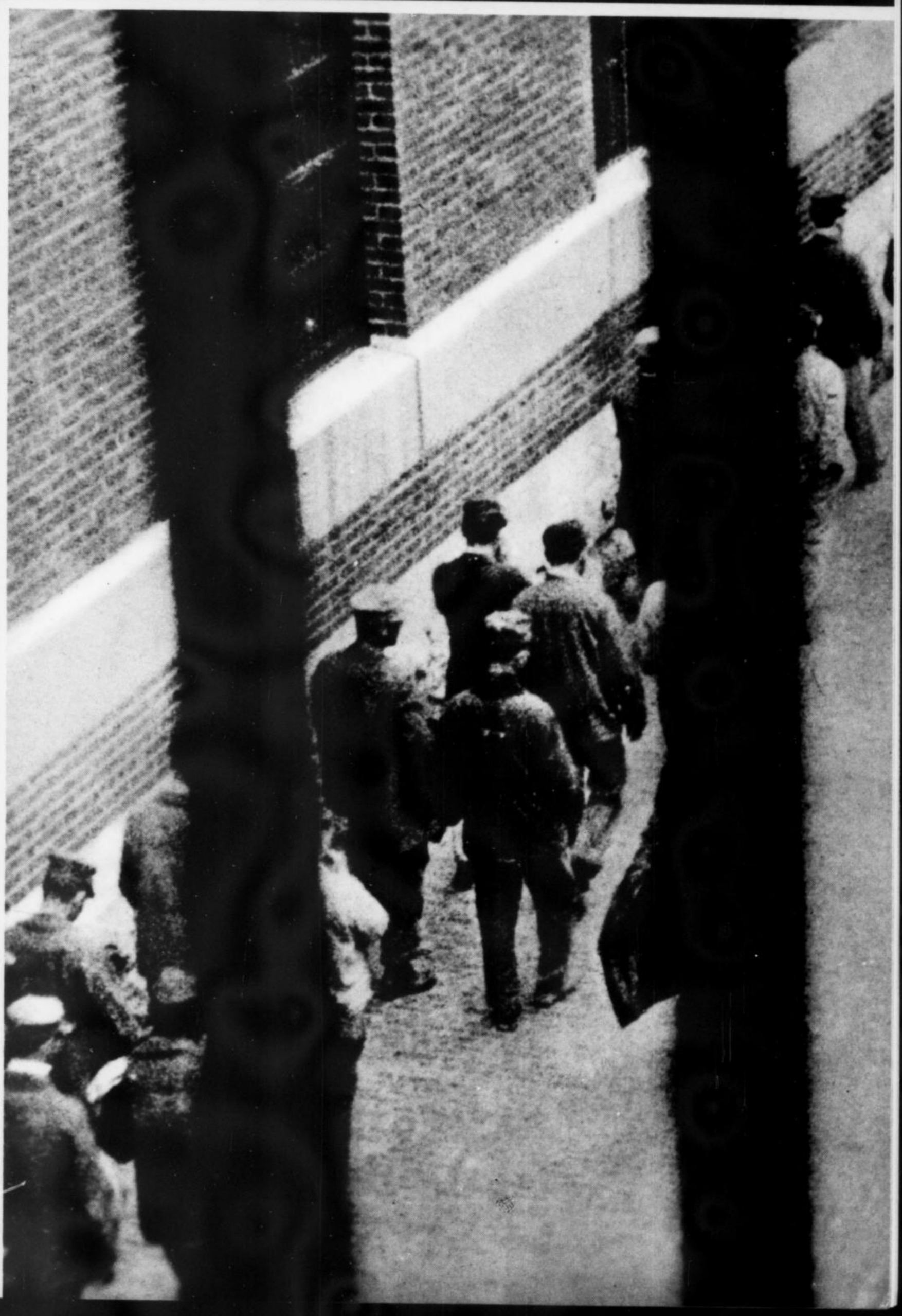
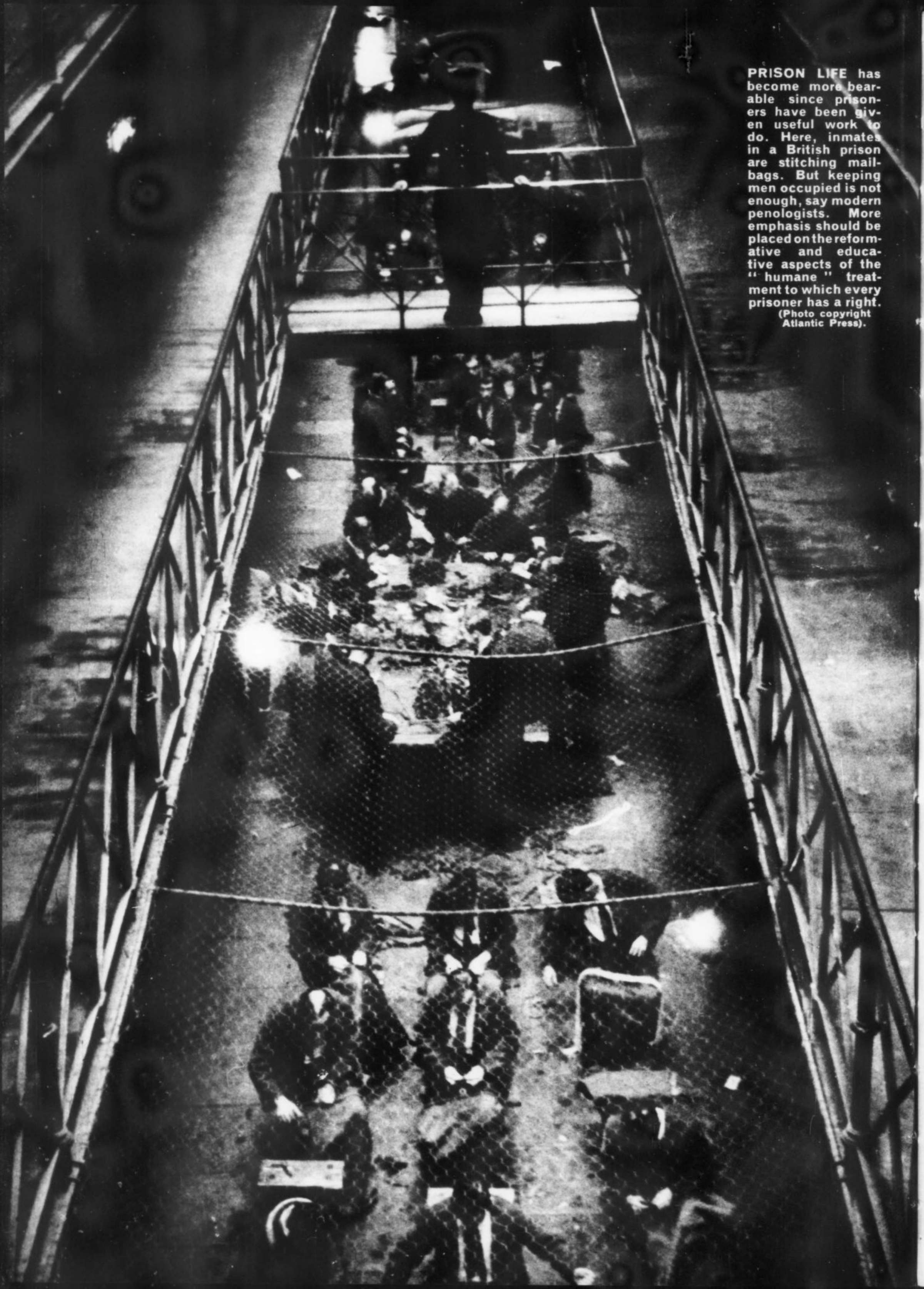
this issue

TIME AND JUSTICE

Are our laws and prisons out of date?

WHAT GETS TEEN-AGERS INTO TROUBLE?





PRISON LIFE has become more bearable since prisoners have been given useful work to do. Here, inmates in a British prison are stitching mailbags. But keeping men occupied is not enough, say modern penologists. More emphasis should be placed on the reformative and educative aspects of the "humane" treatment to which every prisoner has a right.
(Photo copyright Atlantic Press).

The UNESCO Courier

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HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

DECEMBER 10, 1954

It may seem paradoxical to speak of human rights in connection with men who have been legally deprived of one of the most fundamental of all rights—freedom. But for centuries writers, thinkers and humanitarian men and women have fought so that the prisoner might retain at least the right of being treated as a human being.

CRIME has been called a many-headed monster with tentacles that reach out far and wide embracing people in all walks of life. Of the numerous problems that confront society in modern times there are probably few that have so strong an impact on the general public as that concerning the criminal.

Crime is a world problem of tremendous complexity. It directly affects not only the police, the lawyer and the judge along with the average person who reads about it in his daily newspaper, but the psychologist, the psychiatrist and the social worker.

Somehow, though, most of us are apt to forget that it also affects the man who has actually broken the law and who is "sent away." We may not realize it but the plain fact is that 98 per cent of those who go into prison ultimately return to their communities and to society.

A person who has broken the law or committed a crime has the same feelings, the same emotions and ambitions as other human beings. The act he committed may be the result of blind passion or of a life of distorted viewpoints, out of keeping with what the rest of us consider right and normal. But the mere fact that a man has broken the law and been sent to prison does not stamp out his desires and ambitions, or make him any less a human being—even though all of us condemn his act.

Today, whether we admit it or not, society still punishes for punishment's sake. The majority of our prisons are still grim man-cages, surrounded by high forbidding walls, patrolled by armed guards and bristling with other restrictive devices. And although much progress has been made in recent years in prison reform, the public still believes that merely locking a man up will sober him and make him want to be a better person. Yet the reverse is usually true. Most men come out of such places worse than when they went in, filled with bitterness and even hatred for society which deprived them of their freedom without giving them a chance to better their condition.

In the past few years, the idea has been gaining considerable ground of prisons without walls, without guns, without armed guards, where the dignity of the individual is recognized and where emphasis is placed on self-discipline. Such prisons, known as "open institutions", now exist in a number of countries, and in 1945 Sweden became the first country to make them the normal basis of its entire prison system.

Since 1948, the United Nations has assumed the leadership in international activities concerned with the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders (both young and old). Through its Department of Social Affairs it has taken over the work formerly performed by the International Penal and Penitentiary Commission, and has arranged periodic meetings of regional groups to re-assess the practical forms of crime prevention and treatment of offenders. A world congress on this entire subject is now scheduled for 1955.

Unesco has not done much in the field of criminology. It has dealt with certain psychological and social aspects of juvenile delinquency, primarily in co-operation with the World Federation for Mental Health and the International Federation of Senior Police Officials. Since 1950 it has given financial aid to the International Society of Criminology which groups five international associations dealing with the scientific study of criminal behaviour, and last year helped finance the second International Criminological Course at Unesco headquarters.

For the sixth anniversary of the adoption by the United Nations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10, the *Unesco Courier* devotes this issue to the idea that prisoners are people, that the person who breaks the law is a human being who has the right to be treated as such, that prisoners should be returned to society with a better attitude than when they entered prison, that they must be taught the dignity of work and given an opportunity to acquire new skills by which they may make an honest living and once again become decent citizens.

Respect for local traditions and the rights of minorities is applied to legal matters in French Morocco, where several kinds of courts function side by side. Koranic courts for Arabs and Rabbinical courts for Moroccan Jews deal with religious and family questions such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, etc. Offences carrying sentences of less than two years' imprisonment, whether involving Arab or Jewish Moroccan citizens, are judged by local "Pacha" courts, while more serious cases are heard in higher "Sherifian" courts. In cases where one of the two parties concerned is French, judgment is delivered by a French court. Photos on these pages show: above, a "Pacha" court judge, an accused person and his lawyer; below, a Rabbinical court and a French court (Photos copyright Paul Almasy).

JUSTICE

A net freeing the innocent but trapping the guilty

By Reginald Hemeleers

NO peace-loving citizen with a clear conscience ever takes to his heels at the sight of a policeman. On the contrary, the badge and the polished buttons usually give him a sense of security. He knows that they will protect him against danger and injustice.

The role of the policeman—and of the entire judicial structure—is to protect the security of the citizen. The policeman is not an enemy of freedom; instead, he is its guarantor. It is he who prevents the anti-social citizen from disturbing the peace of society.

Few people will quarrel with these statements. But they probably will tempt a good many people to wonder why men have always fought so desperately against excesses of power —and why the severest criticism which can be levelled against a political system is the label "police state".

The answer, of course, is that the police can quickly become the worst possible menace to individual freedom if free institutions are not solidly established or, even worse, if the morality of society is decaying.

The police, in themselves, are only an instrument. In the hands of arbitrary power, this instrument can become a blind force of evil. Naturally not all authoritarian regimes have been inhuman. Despotism can be enlightened. Did not Plato proclaim in his *Republic* that men shall be happy when kings become philosophers or philosophers become kings? Machiavelli, Rousseau and a good many others meditated over the eternal problem of the "good tyrant".

Nevertheless, man prefers not to put himself in the hands of fate. Instead, he demands guarantees—the t's crossed and i's dotted on his rights.

Men have fought hard to obtain such guarantees of individual liberty from their rulers. In England, centuries of struggle led to the Habeas Corpus Act adopted under Charles II in 1679 and it was this act which spelled out the main safeguards of individual liberty to be found in most modern constitutions. The storming of the Bastille in Paris, a turning point in Western history, was no more than a popular uprising against a reign of arbitrary arrests and "letters of cachet".

Today, what guarantees do we have of individual liberty? First, it should be noted that they vary from country to country. They have been stated differently, having been integrated into different legal structures but their principles are generally the same.

The first of these principles is that no man can be punished unless he has violated a law already on the statute books. The second is that his punishment must be decided by an independent magistrature — independent, that is, from the ruling power. At the base of this system is the legislator who must define prohibited acts in advance and lay down penalties to enforce his prohibitions.

Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 10, 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, as a general principle, that "no one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile". Then it goes on to underscore the need of a legal basis for any condemnation. In Article II (section 2), it declares:

"No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed".

This is an enormous guarantee. The definition of a crime and the fixing of its penalty must be established in advance and made known. Under this article, it is not possible for the state to concoct an infraction at the last minute to imprison a citizen—as has been done so often in the past.

Still, it is only a guarantee in law. It is not enough, unless it is reinforced

(Cont'd on next page)

Reginald Hemeleers was formerly a barrister at the Brussels Court of Appeal. A founder and editor of La Revue nouvelle *and a former director of the Belgian weekly,* La Relève, *he is the author of many papers on legal questions. Since 1953, he has been head of Unesco's Press Division.*

JUSTICE *(Cont'd)*

CAMEL-MOUNTED police capture a suspected bandit after a wild chase across Syrian desert (lower photos). Above, suspect is interrogated by police authorities to determine whether formal charges are to be preferred. (Copyright Paul Almasy).

by another concerning the enforcement of the law. It is the judge, after all, who must decide whether or not an infraction has been committed and, if necessary, pass sentence. He cannot do so conscientiously unless he has a clearly-defined status guaranteeing his independence.

The Anglo-Saxon system of the separation of powers, which has been widely imitated, safeguards the independence of the judiciary both from the legislative and the executive arms of government. This independence —the law of the land in most nations— demands of any judge an acute awareness of his responsibilities and the gravity of his mission. There would be no point in protecting the independence of a judge willing to take orders or vulnerable to corruption.

In France, Henri François d'Aguesseau, chancellor of France in the early 18th century, has come to symbolize the judge of integrity, fiercely jealous of his independence. D'Aguesseau did not hesitate to lay down a maxim which remains true to this day: "The judge who is not a hero is not even an upright man."

Strictly speaking, the principles of the legality of punishment and the independence of the judiciary are not guarantees of individual freedom. They are merely two main prerequisites for an equitable system of justice. Of course, they give a defendant a maximum of opportunities to stand on his rights, but they are only part of a series of principles whose objective is to avoid, insofar as possible, condemning an innocent man.

The entire question of individual liberty cannot be separated from the problem of preventive custody. Obviously, if a man is suspected of a serious crime such as a murder, he cannot be left completely free until a verdict is rendered. There is always the risk that he may go into hiding or flee the country. Secondly, in a serious case, investigators nearly always require that the suspect be kept in custody—if only to prevent him destroying the evidence of his guilt.

This principle of preventive custody is widely accepted and it does not conflict with the Declaration of Human Rights (Article II, Section 1) where it is stated that "everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he had all the guarantees necessary for his defence".

But preventive custody does carry the seed of a grave danger to individual liberty—the possibility that, once a suspect is arrested, he may be simply left to rot in prison by authorities that never go to the trouble of accusing him formally and never give him his day in court.

The insidious growth of a form of administrative detention without any admitted cause—and without any fixed limit in time—must be avoided at any price. A perfect penal code would be meaningless if authorities had the power of locking up a citizen without telling him which of its laws he had violated. A corps of honest, independent judges would be useless if men could be imprisoned without their cases ever coming before these judges. And the accused man's carefully-defined right to a defence is valueless if he never has the possibility of defending himself. Under such conditions, society returns immediately to the "letters of cachet" which the burners of the Bastille thought they had destroyed for eternity!

When burghers fled

To avoid these abuses, nearly every country has laws to limit preventive custody. In most nations, no man can be arrested without a warrant delivered by a judicial authority. Under the justly-famed principle of *habeas corpus*, charges must be preferred against him after an extremely short period following his arrest. The burden of proof is on the state to show why preventive custody is believed necessary and why the suspect should not be allowed to go out on bail.

In some countries, the procedure is somewhat different. There, the state must obtain a "confirmation" of the warrant in court and, if the warrant is not confirmed, the prisoner must be set at liberty until his trial. In any case, this confirmation is only for a short period, usually several weeks, and the warrant must be confirmed all over again if the suspect is to be kept behind bars.

This is a brief and simplified description of the system of preventive custody which varies in its finer points from one country to another. It is intended to provide only a general

view of a technique which has been developed in the long struggle for human freedom to protect the citizen in his dealings with authority.

Earlier, I mentioned that the average citizen is usually comforted by the sight of a policeman. This has not always been the case. For centuries, burghers fled automatically at the approach of the watch. Only a few years ago, the Nazi regime filled prisons and concentration camps with men who had never been judged, men who were to die shamefully without ever knowing the reason why. Even today, all of the fundamental guarantees of individual liberty proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are not fulfilled everywhere.

On this anniversary of Human Rights Day, it might be wise to meditate for a few moments on the long, hard road which men have had to travel before their "right to liberty and security of person" was formally recognized. This is the most basic of rights after the right to life itself.

Until he is condemned, a defendant is presumed innocent. It is up to the state and its representative to prove the accusations against him.

More than at any other time, it is during the phase of investigation that the state must remember that the accused is presumed innocent and that, even if he is found guilty, he remains a man and must be treated as one. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states very simply: "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment".

Curse of all eras

THERE is a good deal in this short sentence. In its soberness, it opens some frightening glimpses of the infinite range of human agony. Torture was not the exclusive property of the Middle Ages. It has been the curse of all eras and of all countries. For there has always been—and there always will be—the irritating case of the defendant accused from all sides but without any proof against him.

At this point you can find the obsession of nearly every police force —the extortion of a confession. Though the rack and the thumbscrew may not be used today, there are still endless sessions of grilling without food or sleep, to say nothing of the more or less refined form of the "third degree"

No doubt, the job of tracking down criminals is a delicate one and basic to the survival of society. But a balance must be struck between the demands of society and an elementary respect for the man—who is presumed innocent—under accusation.

'Occupational disease'

IT is this preliminary investigation which is the most delicate phase of the relationship between the citizen and the judicial authorities. This is the phase which is the least controlled by law; therefore, it demands the highest degree of education and of conscience from judicial personnel at all levels.

Once the investigation is completed, the defendant is brought to trial. In addition to those two basic guarantees of a legal basis for punishment and the independence of the judiciary, there are two other principles fundamental to equitable justice: a public trial and the presence of counsel for the defendant.

Low blows are always struck in the dark. Throughout history, one-sided trials have been held behind closed doors and often before special jurisdictions created to hear a single case

The public trial is a strong guarantee of justice. Within a locked room, a few accomplices can perjure away the weight of evidence. But it is much more difficult to do so in public, especially in front of press writers whose accounts of the testimony may be printed for millions to read.

This does not mean that justice should be rendered with an eye to public opinion, which is often impassioned and ill-informed. The verdict is the province only of the judge's conscience and it is up to him to divorce himself from any external influences.

The right of the defendant to a counsel of his own choice to aid him and act in his name is so essential that, without it, all of the other guarantees become almost illusory. A defendant can be illiterate or, at any rate, unfamiliar with legal procedure. where only a specialist after all is at home. If a competent person cannot act for him, then the advantages of the prosecution are absurdly one-sided.

Many countries accord another guarantee to defendants facing serious charges: the right to trial by jury. The jury, you might say, offsets the risk that the judge might suffer from a sort of "occupational disease" as the result of his coming into contact every day with criminals and, therefore, might tend to see criminals everywhere. The jury relieves the specialist of his heaviest responsibility and confides it to a dozen citizens chosen by lot.

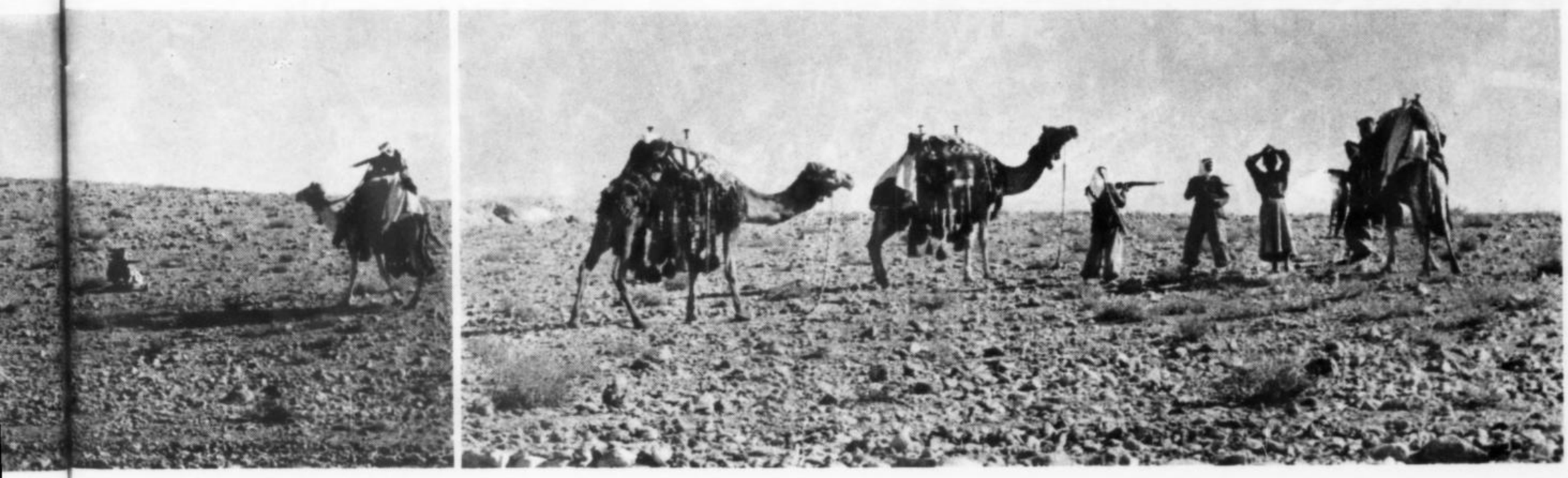
Experience has proved that jurors, freed as they are from the grinding routine of law, usually perform their duties with the utmost conscientiousness—and often lend a more willing ear to the Counsel for the defence when he argues the weaknesses of the evidence presented than might a judge who had heard such arguments all too often in the past.

No courts infallible

ONE after another, these guarantees have made justice a net whose mesh allows the innocent to pass but traps the guilty. The guarantees cited here are only the most often applied. They provide a picture of humanity's eternal effort to bring order to society without menacing the peaceful citizen.

Courts have always made mistakes. The most perfect technique can only serve to reduce the number of these mistakes to a minimum. But anyone who has studied the problem closely will agree that judicial error is one of the most flagrant scandals which can afflict society, a scandal which must be combatted as if it were the plague.

When citizens lose confidence in justice, they return to the anarchy of personal revenge. This means nothing less than the death of liberty, the oppression of the weak by the strong and the very negation of rule by law.



BIG, OLD PRISONS are still the rule rather than the exception in the penitentiary systems of all countries. Prison design and construction has not kept pace with progress in penal ideals and methods. The result is that convicted offenders still serve their sentences in "man-cages", like the prison above, and are often required to "exercise" in the limited space of a prison yard like the one shown, below. Of these particular exercise yards, one observer wrote: "They are a maze of concrete, with sad oases of earth, where a few soot-covered flowers turn their defeated faces to the sky. Here the prisoners walk round and round and back and forth, clockwise and anticlockwise, as if in a crazy squirrel cage".

One April afternoon many years ago, I found myself on the roof of a large school which was being built in a suburb of Paris. With me were two friends, the architect (one of the most famous in France) and an Italian anti-fascist political leader who had recently escaped from one of Mussolini's gaols.

The three of us were inspecting the new building which was almost completed. We admired its beautiful lines, its highly rational structure and its bold conception. The new school was obviously the product of a highly civilized world. It was open to the sun and fresh air and dedicated to children who were free and carefully looked after.

From the top of the roof, we stopped to look down on the old houses of the suburb and the surrounding countryside. The architect and the political leader began a discussion on their impressions. The politician, recalling his prison experience, said that after the defeat of Fascism, the architect would have to help wipe out the shame of our old prisons by building new ones designed like the new school —modern, humane, open on the world and offering every comfort required. The architect replied that never, at any price, would he have any hand in the building of a prison.

Not having any first-hand knowledge of prison life at the time (though I later obtained it quite a number of times) I merely listened. It seemed to me that both of my friends were guilty of the same sin of Utopianism. But if I had had to choose between the two Utopias, I must say it would have been that of the architect who wanted to abolish prisons altogether rather than that of the political leader who wished to make them comfortable. When you dream, I said to myself, you might as well let the dream be as perfect as possible.

I was reminded of this conversation some years later in a Florence prison room where I was being interrogated by a member of the Fascist political police, O.V.R.A. By that time I had become an old hand at prisons. To me, a prison had always seemed a complete absurdity, like a place that is not really a place, or time that is not time.

On entering the prison room I saw that it was almost entirely taken up by a large iron cage something like the ones circus people use to exhibit their wild animals. The thought that this cage had been built to imprison a human being seemed so ludicrous to me that I could not restrain a short burst of laughter.

We were in the spring of 1943. By then, a session of questioning by the O.V.R.A. police was no longer a terrifying event. Fascism was already dead from exhaustion.

"After some months or years, the prisoner loses his sense of time to the point where the reality of his own existence blurs and vanishes."

I therefore told my police official how utterly senseless and insane the whole idea of prisons seemed to me with the iron cage standing as the symbol of our absurd ritual of punishment. The police official turned to me with a look of pitying stupefaction on his face. Then, he pointed his finger toward the cage, and his eyes lit up with ecstatic admiration. "What are you talking about, doctor," he exclaimed, "it's the very foundation of the State !"

What was this State, founded on cages, on walls and padlocks, on bars and grills, on blind devotion to authority and on the coercive separation of its inhabitants, which my police official worshipped? It was the Fascist State. But the Fascist State did not invent the "man-cages". The march of history does not mean that the slate of the past is wiped completely clean. Too often, ugly practices of the past are carried along side by side with new ideas, new developments and real progress.

Thus even today, and in the most advanced democracies of our time, we still find certain practices and institutions dating back to the Middle Ages, and numerous traces of antiquated authoritarianism. That is precisely how I feel about our prisons. To me, prisons are a typical relic of archaic and cruel cults, one of those carry-overs of past history which humanity has allowed to subsist almost through indifference and inertia, if not through ignorance.

Let there be no misunderstanding about what I have just said. It is obvious that the State, any State, must be able to defend itself against common, even political, criminals. It is equally obvious that when the need arises, the State must be able to isolate those dangerous elements. And it is finally obvious that all measures that are truly efficacious are legitimate, providing one condition, but an essential one, is met. That is that the criminal's dignity as a human being be scrupulously respected. Various measures exist : surveillance, confinement to an institution for the mentally ill, restricted residence, exile, work colonies and finally imprisonment. But as soon as any one of these repressive measures becomes an offence against human dignity, I believe it is no exaggeration to say that from that moment on the punishment itself becomes a crime.

The idea of punishing people by segregating them from the rest of society is based on two somewhat different, if not heterogeneous, notions. There is the legitimate desire to safeguard public order, and also a survival of archaic beliefs requiring that a crime be expiated by ritual sacrifice.

In a primitive society considered by its members as an organic whole, the individual exists only as an integral part of the clan. Any infraction of the normal rules of collective life immediately becomes a stain on the social body, and must be erased by the expulsion or even the destruction of the guilty member. *(Continued on next page)*

A leading Italian writer and artist, Carlo Levi suffered imprisonment and was banished to South Italy for his opposition to the Fascist Regime. He is the author of Christ Stopped at Eboli *and other works.*

WHEN THE PUNISHMENT TOO BECOMES A CRIME

(Continued from previous page)

An obvious trace of this mentality remains in our penal system in the form of the prison, which implies that the offender should be hidden from the eyes of others, so that, having shut out the source of the collective stain, the public can once again enjoy an easy conscience. Christian tradition added its ideas of sin, repentance and redemption to this old-fashioned attitude, endowing prisons with the strange character they have today, an anticipation of hell and purgatory. And finally, modern schools of penal law grafted on to the Christian conception, the philanthropic idea of re-educating the criminal.

Obviously, re-education should be attempted by psychological and moral means rather than by physical compulsion. For it would be a patent contradiction of the idea of re-education to attempt to achieve it by the use of restraint. But since the notion of physical punishment, which is the basis of the penalty of imprisonment, has not yet been submitted to a radical re-examination, it should be clear that the idea of re-education, although a healthy one in itself, threatens to add to the physical restraint of the prisoner a justification of moral constraint which is extremely dangerous for the inalienable character of human liberty.

'Habeas Animam' as well as 'Habeas Corpus'

It was with this in mind that a young Italian scholar, to whom Fascism had extended the dreadful privilege of 15 years of prison life, demanded in a series of articles that the "habeas corpus" should be completed by a recognition of the "habeas animam". "In a society founded on respect for the human person," this author wrote, the soul of even the most abject criminal should be protected by a habeas animam—the sacred right to inviolability from any judge, or any gaoler... Prison, as it exists today, is deprived of all redeeming qualities, because the prisoner gets used to it, and rots there. But the prison which has been turned into a laboratory of redemption, a sanatorium of souls, is a mechanism which corrupts everyone: those who direct it, those ground down by it, and those who believe in its utility."

It seems to me that so long as the penalty of segregation retains its character of a sacred vengeance, all attempts to reconcile imprisonment with the idea of re-education (and thus with the idea of human dignity which re-education pre-supposes), will be vain.

The problem posed for modern man by the persistence of the primitive conception of punishment as symbolized by prison, cannot be reduced to the elimination of physical suffering—such as lack of air and light, dirt, bad food and the occasional cruelty of warders. These are conditions which it is certainly worth while trying to change; but the essential problem is elsewhere.

Job, seated on his dung heap, afflicted by a thousand ills and a thousand woes, loses nothing of his human dignity, nor of his essential freedom. But the cleanest and most scientifically organized prison, the most humane in appearance, causes irreparable harm to the personality of the prisoner after a certain time, for the prison strikes at the very depths of man's being, at his consciousness of time. Consciousness of time and existence of the individual are two expressions of the same reality : the living and moving reality of the relations between the individual and the world within eternity. After a certain number of months or years, the prisoner loses his sense of time to the point where the reality of his own existence blurs and vanishes.

He lives in a world without dimensions, without future, without passions, and thus without humanity.

An unknown force pushes him down

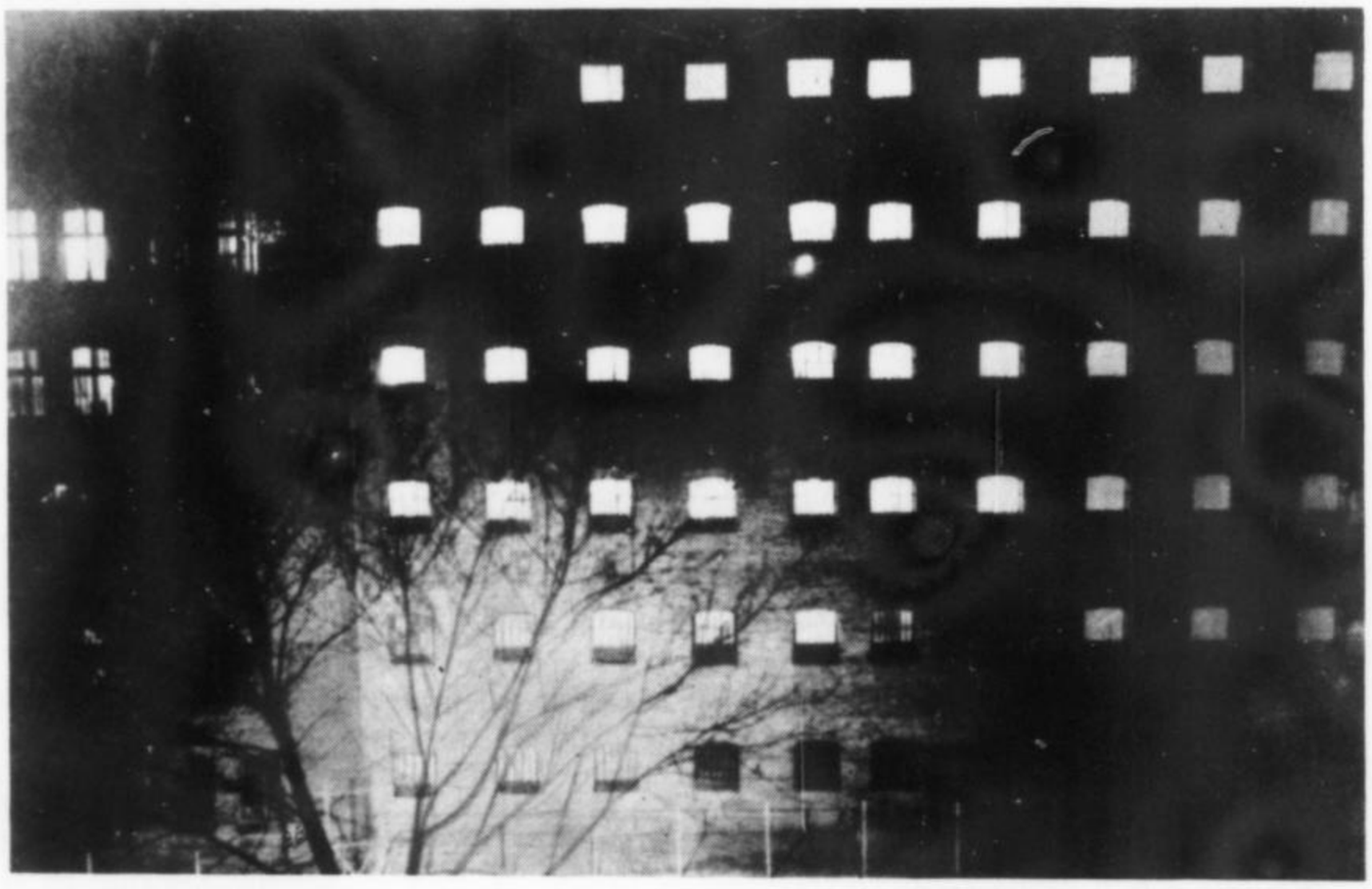
Another Italian intellectual has attempted to draw a mathematical pattern of what he calls "the wait of the prisoner". He says : "after a certain number of years, everything takes place in the consciousness of the prisoner as if his prison term would never come to an end. From this moment, all imprisonment is an imprisonment for life. "

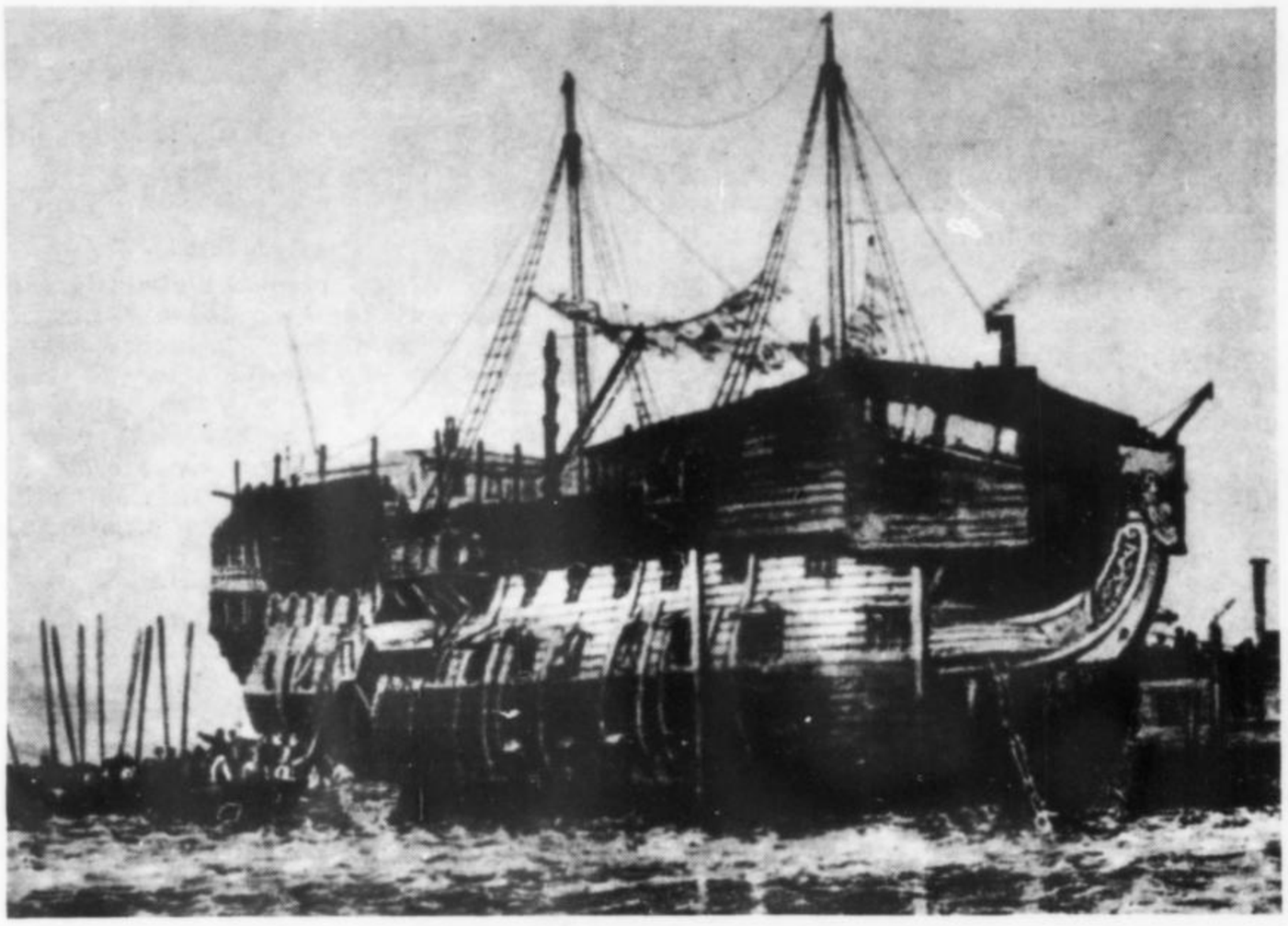
"In the 'Metamorphosis' of Kafka, when young Gregory discovers that each time he tries to get up an unknown force pushes him down again, he abandons all hope. He knows at this moment that he has lost the human dimension, despairs and dies. A similar metamorphosis takes place after a certain time in the personality of the prisoner : time disintegrates and death, which dominates his fate, seems infinite and interminable."

The author concludes that nothing can justify a mutilation of the human being which reaches the point of altering his deepest feelings and his spiritual life. At the same time, he hastens to add, society is probably not yet ready for a radical change in the penalties of imprisonment. But the idea that they might be limited to a maximum of five years, is perhaps not a foolish hope.

I personally believe that in the existing state of society, any attempt at radical reform of these penalties would be premature and doomed to failure. But the problem, nevertheless, remains, and it seems to me that, together with Unesco's efforts to publicize the Universal Declaration, an attempt should be made to make present-day society more aware of these particularly acute problems of human rights. In my opinion, the problem of the relationship between the modern penitentiary system and our conception of human dignity deserves discussion and thought.

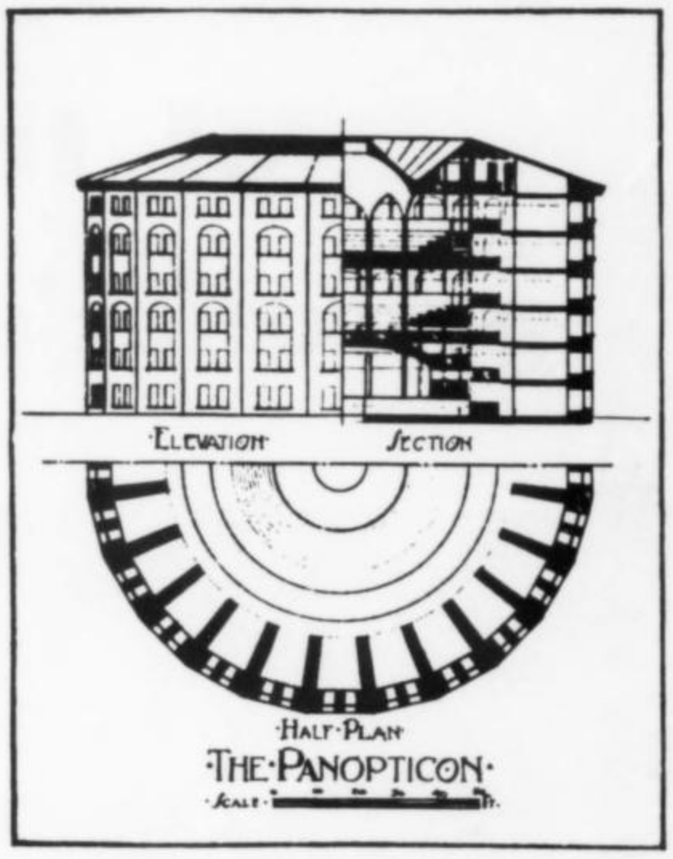
I cannot help feeling that the present penitentiary system —as practised in almost every country—is marked by the cruelty, inhumanity and degradation condemned by Article 5 in the Universal Declaration.





PRISON HULKS like this one in the dockyard at Portsmouth, England, were used to confine convicts in the last half of the eighteenth century. Dirty, crowded and unhealthy, these terrible floating prisons were constantly infected with disease.

THE PANOPTICON, a circular prison with cells around the outside walls, was designed in 1791 by Jeremy Bentham, the English philosopher, jurist and social reformer. He called it the "Panopticon" or "inspection house" because of the ease with which the whole building could be observed from a control point in the centre.



STORY OF PRISONS

Their evolution as an agency of punishment

by Ronald Fenton

PRISONS, said the Romans, two thousand years ago, are places for holding, not for punishing offenders. Today we are slowly coming back to this ancient Roman definition of prisons, which modern penologists feel should not be used for punishing an offender, but for his safe custody and rehabilitation.

Does this mean that history is repeating itself? Only up to a point, for the ideas behind these ancient and modern definitions of a prison's role are poles apart. Today we are coming closer to the idea that the man goes into prison but his crime halts at the gate.

In ancient times a man was not sentenced by law to spend years in prison. But he had little to hope for as he laid in some dark, filthy cell. He might rot there for years awaiting trial or because he was unable to pay a fine or a debt. If he had already been found guilty of a crime, prison was merely a prelude to brutal corporal punishment or a horrible death.

Today hope is no longer locked outside as the prison gate closes behind a convicted offender. Society claims "the right to punish" and uses prison as a weapon of self-defence, but it also recognizes the prisoner's right to be treated as a human being.

Slowly, humanity has removed the sting of hatred and cruelty from punishment. It has begun to look at the man beneath the criminal, to see the need for helping him rather than making him suffer. Thus a prison's primary role is to give men and women treatment and guidance that can help to reform them and to prevent them relapsing into crime after their release.

When we pass by some prison or reformatory and look up at the high walls and barred windows we wonder what prison life is like. We may feel sorry for those inside because they have been deprived of freedom or we may think, unfeelingly, "it serves them right". But in either case we look on prison as the normal way of dealing with someone found guilty of a crime.

People today are so used to the idea of an offender being punished by a prison sentence that they tend to forget how long it took for their forebears to accept the same idea. They forget, too, that it is not so long ago since men and women in many countries were engaged in one of the fiercest struggles in the history of human rights—the fight to end the cruel and inhuman treatment of prisoners.

Until less than a century and a half ago most punishments prescribed by law were brutal and even barbarous.

It is in the code of Hammurabi, dating back some 4,000 years, that we first meet the *lex talionis,* the demand for revenge of a crime later expressed in the Biblical words:"an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth". Offenders were regarded as "brutes", and treated as such. From earliest times torture was used, not only to extract confessions, but also as a punishment. Even Aristotle, the great Greek philosopher, condoned torture, and its elaborate regulation in Roman law became the basis for all the gruesome medieval legislation in Italy, Spain, France and Germany. Though not authorized by common law, torture was practised in England under royal privilege in the days of the Tudors and the Stuarts.

Persons condemned to death were executed in the most horrible ways imaginable. They were crucified, stoned to death, buried alive, torn apart by wild horses, thrown to wild beasts. Even when forms of capital punishment became more humane, more offences became capital ones. In the England of 1789 there were, according

(Continued on page 14)

Seven apostles of the prisoner's rights

BEHIND the reforms which have gradually diminished the horror of prison conditions, there are the works of philosophers and jurists who fought for equality between men, respect for the individual and the supremacy of reason over prejudice. There is also the example of charity relieving suffering and defying unjust laws. The humble devotion of a St Vincent de Paul was as important to this movement as the genius of a Spinoza or a Grotius. And it is quite clear that there is a direct link from Locke, Voltaire, Montesquieu, Christian Wolff, Helvetius or Rousseau down to the somewhat specialized reformers a few of whom are presented here. Here are some of the great men to whom we owe the major features of our modern penal institutions.

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Cesare Beccaria (1738-1790)

Few books have had as much influence on our penal systems as the great work of Cesare Beccaria: "Trattato dei delitti e delle pene" (Essay on Crimes and Punishment) which appeared in 1764. It was an immediate success in Italy and in France. Soon, its fame spread throughout Europe and to America. Even more important, its teachings were to be embodied several years later in the constitutions of certain nations which, in turn, served as models to the lawmakers of nearly every country on earth.

Beccaria was a disciple of Montesquieu, whose "Persian Letters" he read enthusiastically at the age of 22, and a friend of d'Alembert, Diderot, Helvetius and Buffon

counting the steps, measuring the rooms, copying down the regulations and testing the supplies. He is said to have spent over £30,000 of his own fortune in the work.

Howard then turned his attention to quarantine stations, the lazarettos, where plague victims or contacts were isolated, and courageously visited those of Constantinople and Smyrna. Travelling from Smyrna to Venice he purposely chose a ship with a foul bill of health, knowing that he would thus be confined in a lazaretto on arrival in Venice. He spent 42 days in two lazarettos studying conditions at first hand.

There remained the problem of military hospitals, and knowing those of Russia to be very defective he set out on what was to be his last journey. It took him to St Petersburg, Moscow and, eventually, to Kherson, in the Ukraine, where he nursed a young woman suffering from "camp fever" and died of it himself on January 20, 1790.

★

Philippe Pinel (1745-1826)

About the year 1765, a French medical student named Philippe Pinel revolted against the prejudices, case-hardened traditions and bookish teachings of his day. He wanted to apply to medicine "a method similar to that of the other physical sciences". He followed this idea all of his life, but he won his greatest glory as a liberator. It was not criminals who were freed by Pinel but the insane who had been treated up until then (at least in the Western World) as criminals and worse.

As physician to the Bicetre Hospital where male lunatics were kept in Paris in 1793, he could no longer bear the sight of these miserable creatures howling in the cages where they were chained and whipped. He wrote to his superiors: "Far from being criminals who must be punished, the insane are sick persons whose pitiful state deserves all of the consideration we owe to suffering

humanity." The authorities hesitated; one of the leaders of the Reign of Terror came to Bicetre to see for himself. "Citizen, you must be crazy yourself to wish to unchain such beasts" he said.

Pinel's answer perhaps went beyond merely the insane: "I am convinced that the reason why nothing can be done with them is because we deprive them of freedom." He "unchained" his patients and, two years later, he did the same for insane women at the Salpetriere Hospital.

The book he wrote on his "Research and Observations on the Treatment of the Insane" spread his ideas far and wide. They were daring ideas: he preached that men could be cured of insanity only through the use of "reason, sensitiveness and persuasion". "The insane", he wrote, "should be approached with a love of humanity great enough to inspire the courage to conquer routine and fear."

★

Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832)

Jeremy Bentham, one of the English pioneer prison reformers, like Beccaria, based his thinking on the great principle of utilitarianism: the just action is the one which brings the greatest happiness to the greatest number of people. This was the foundation of his work as a moralist and as a jurist which brought him recognition and admiration from such disciples as Mirabeau, Thomas Paine and Benjamin Rush, from distant correspondents such as Mohamed Ali and from a large number of far less respectful imitators and plagiarists. Talleyrand once commented of Bentham: "Though pillaged by everyone, he remains rich". In his writings, Bentham maintained that punishment is an evil in itself and can only be accepted "so far as it promises to exclude some greater evil".

In his conception of the treatment of offenders Ben-

who received him triumphantly in Paris.

Applying to criminal law the main precepts of the "philosophy of light", Beccaria began with the "Social Contract", under which the individual voluntarily gives up part of his liberty—as small a part as possible—to society. The only objective of criminal law, he reasoned, was to defend society and, therefore, the restraint it places upon the guilty man can go no further than is absolutely necessary to protect society. As for the death penalty, it is neither useful nor necessary, and, added Beccaria, it has no basis in law because no individual has ever voluntarily given society the right to decide if he is to live or die.

Beccaria probably never would have written his book without the help of two of his fellow countrymen, the Verri brothers, both ardent reformers. In Milan, Alessandro Verri was known as "the protector of prisoners" and he lashed out daily against the frequency of judicial errors, the irregularity of court procedure, the cruelty and the disproportionate nature of penalties, the use of torture and the hellish conditions in prisons.

"Of Crimes and Punishment", therefore, was the fruit of common meditation over first-hand evidence. In fact, this book became known not so much for its principles but for its criticism of the arbitrary and ferocious judicial methods of its time. Those who read this scathing analysis (among them was the Empress of Russia) were unable to do so without a feeling of shame. In the end, their shame proved salutary.

★

John Howard (1726-1790)

When John Howard, a wealthy English landowner, was appointed High Sheriff of Bedfordshire in 1773, one of his duties was the safe custody of prisoners in his

county. But unlike others holding the same office in England he was more concerned about the dreadful state of the prisons and the misery of the inmates than with the problem of preventing them from escaping.

He was particularly shocked to find in prison people who had been declared not guilty or against whom a Grand Jury had failed to find a true bill of accusations, but who remained there simply because they could not pay "release fees" to the prison officers.

It was true that many such men and women were not likely to stay in prison indefinitely for they had every chance of dying quickly from hunger or disease. Howard set out to change what he had seen in his county's prisons. Visiting jails, poorhouses and houses of correction, he uncovered many abuses. When the evidence he collected was placed before Parliament, two bills were passed requiring counties to pay their prison staffs and to clean prisons, and clothe and care for the inmates.

But Howard was still not satisfied. After visiting Scottish and Irish prisons he went to France and visited the principal Paris jails, although he failed to get inside the Bastille. From here he went to Holland Flanders and Germany. A second visit to the continent and more inspections in England gave him the material he required for his famous work "The State of the Prisons in England and Wales", in which he also included accounts of some foreign prisons. One of the results was the passing of a bill authorizing the construction of two penitentiary houses in which it was intended to introduce successful mesures Howard had seen in Ghent and Amsterdam such as giving inmates useful work to do.

A simple, deeply religious man, Howard worked unaided by either state or charitable institutions. Self appointed inspector of prisons at home and abroad he travelled some 50,000 miles, notebook in hand, visiting prisons, hospitals, lazarettos, schools and poorhouses, questioning the authorities,

tham was far in advance of his age, but a plan for prison reform which he proposed was spoiled by the elaborate detail which he loved. Under this scheme, he declared: "Morals would be reformed, health preserved, industry invigorated and instruction diffused."

★

Manuel Montesinos (19th century)

If a traveller had set out in 1835 to visit the world's most modern and most "progressive" prison, he would probably have ended up in Valencia, Spain. There, Colonel Manuel Montesinos had set up a penal system which combined liberal ideas with firm discipline. He operated it on principles which, even today, are sometimes regarded as novel and surprising. Our traveller certainly would have been struck by the appearance of this prison, the cleanliness of its cells, its dining rooms and its workshops, and the charm of its gardens. He would have admired the wide variety of occupations offered its inmates—in all, more than forty trades were taught there. But Montesinos' major innovation was his method of individualized treatment. When an inmate arrived at Valencia, he underwent a detailed examination of "his instincts, his culture, his education and his moral and religious situation", and this study continued until his release. It was Montesinos who declared: "The crime remains outside the door of this institution; our mission is to re-educate the man".

★

Cesare Lombroso (1835-1909)

When Society had recognised that the insane were

not criminals, a delicate question began to be posed: were criminals, in many cases, mentally abnormal? The answer of Cesare Lombroso of Italy was that "the criminal is more often a sick man than a guilty one". A psychiatrist and an anthropologist, Lombroso pleaded that nations, instead of passing hasty judgments, should study "the human action called crime". This study, in his opinion, should not be solely the business of judges but should be entrusted to specialists capable of examining a criminal on the basis of "climate, geography, race, population density, birth-rate, diet, alcoholism, education, economy, religion and, finally, the prison itself." It was a demanding programme. To Lombroso, a crime was usually only the act of an abnormal or a sick person. Society's duty in connection with crime, therefore, should be only concerned with "curing the delinquent." "It is time," he declared, "that we change our concept of the defence of society to one of rehabilitating the guilty man."

★

Franz von Liszt (1815-1919)

One of the most illustrious figures in criminal law, Franz von Liszt was as illustrious in science as was his cousin in music. Liszt's life work was the scientific foundation and reform of criminal law. He challenged the principle of regarding punishment as a reprisal and introduced the method of investigating the causes of crime. Together with G.A. von Hamel of Amsterdam and Adolphe Prins of Brussels, he established in 1889 the International Association of Criminal Law (L'Union Internationale de Droit Penal). The Association contended that crime and punishment should be considered as much from a sociological as from a judicial point of view, and the reforms it initiated became the basis of modern criminal law. Liszt's efforts is favour of conditional sentence and pardon as well as postponement of punishment later passed into practice.

The horror of early prisons

(Continued from page 11)

to one authority, no less than 350 capital crimes, compared with only 17 in the early part of the 15th century. Most of those added after 1500 were offences against property—mostly trivial crimes.

But these brutal laws eventually provoked a revolt against capital punishment in 18th century England. Juries either acquitted the accused or found them guilty of stealing 39 shillings (the theft of 40 shillings was a capital offence) regardless of the sum they confessed to stealing or were proved to have stolen.

Flogging and branding

BRUTAL punishments were imposed for minor offences. Flogging, branding and mutilation were the most common. In 16th century England a beggar was whipped for a first offence; for the second an ear was cut off; for the third offence the penalty was death. Reasoning that "they might as well be hanged for a sheep as a lamb," beggars turned to a more rewarding form of crime—robbery.

Nagging housewives were strapped in a ducking stool and plunged repeatedly into a pond. For such offences as seditious libel, especially in books published without a licence, giving short weight and brawling in the street, favourite instruments of punishment in England and the American Colonies were the pillory and the stocks. These pinned the victim's wrists or ankles while he was jeered at and pelted with rotten vegetables in the market place.

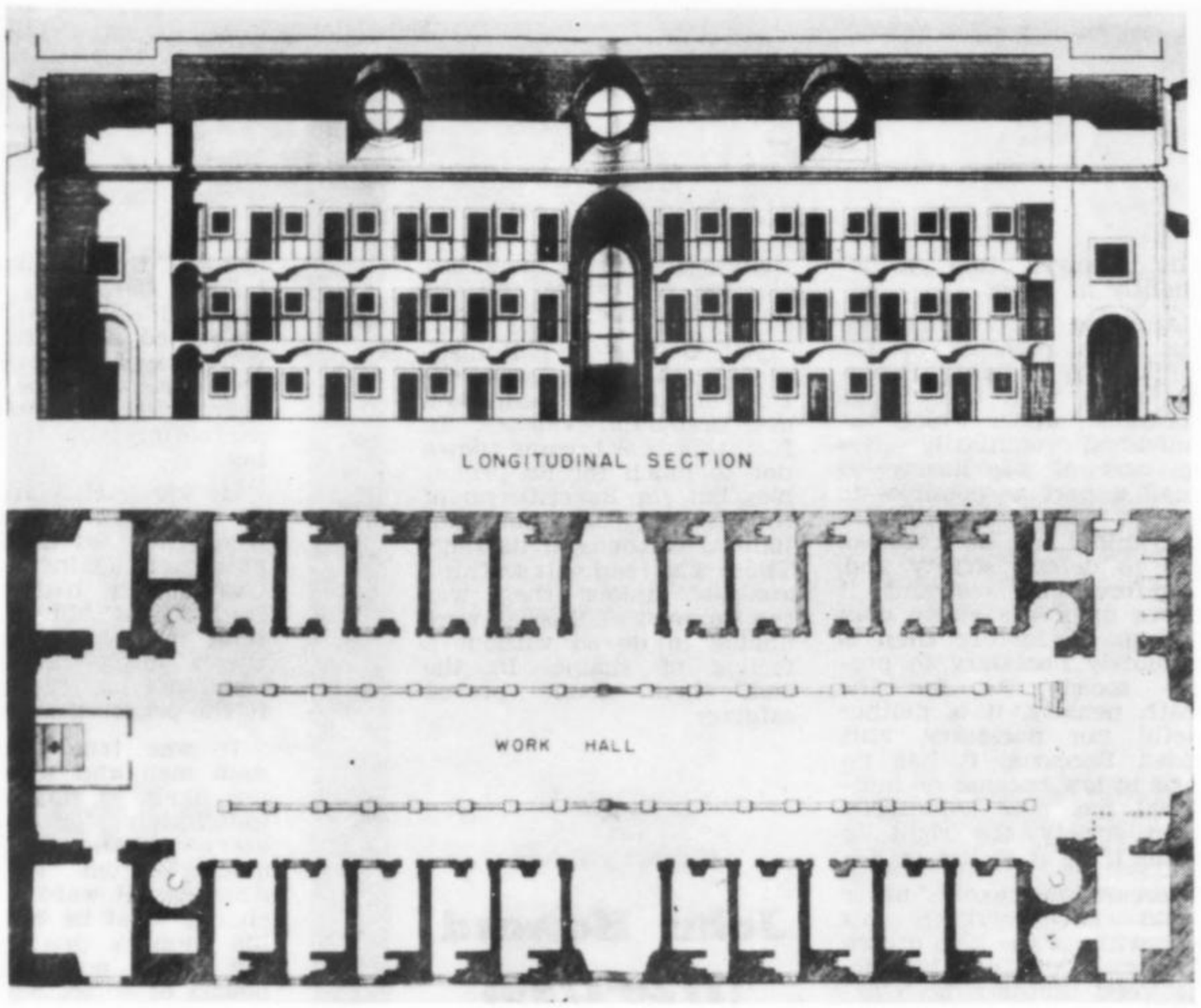
It was only in the 16th century that prisons began to be used as places for punishment in England. This was no humanitarian move inspired by legal reforms. There was, in fact, little humanitarian improvement in penal practices for another two centuries. The setting up of prisons was brought about by the increase in the number of vagrants towards the end of the medieval system.

Under the feudal system, the landed classes regularly provided for their dependents and helped them in sickness and old age. Such organized charity as was needed was provided by the Church. The end of the medieval system cut off this "social assistance" and created a serious poverty problem.

This new situation, together with the enclosure of peasant farming land in England, swelled the number of unruly vagrants to such an extent that the authorities set up crude prisons in which to confine the army of vagabonds, and these early institutions were the forerunners of our prisons.

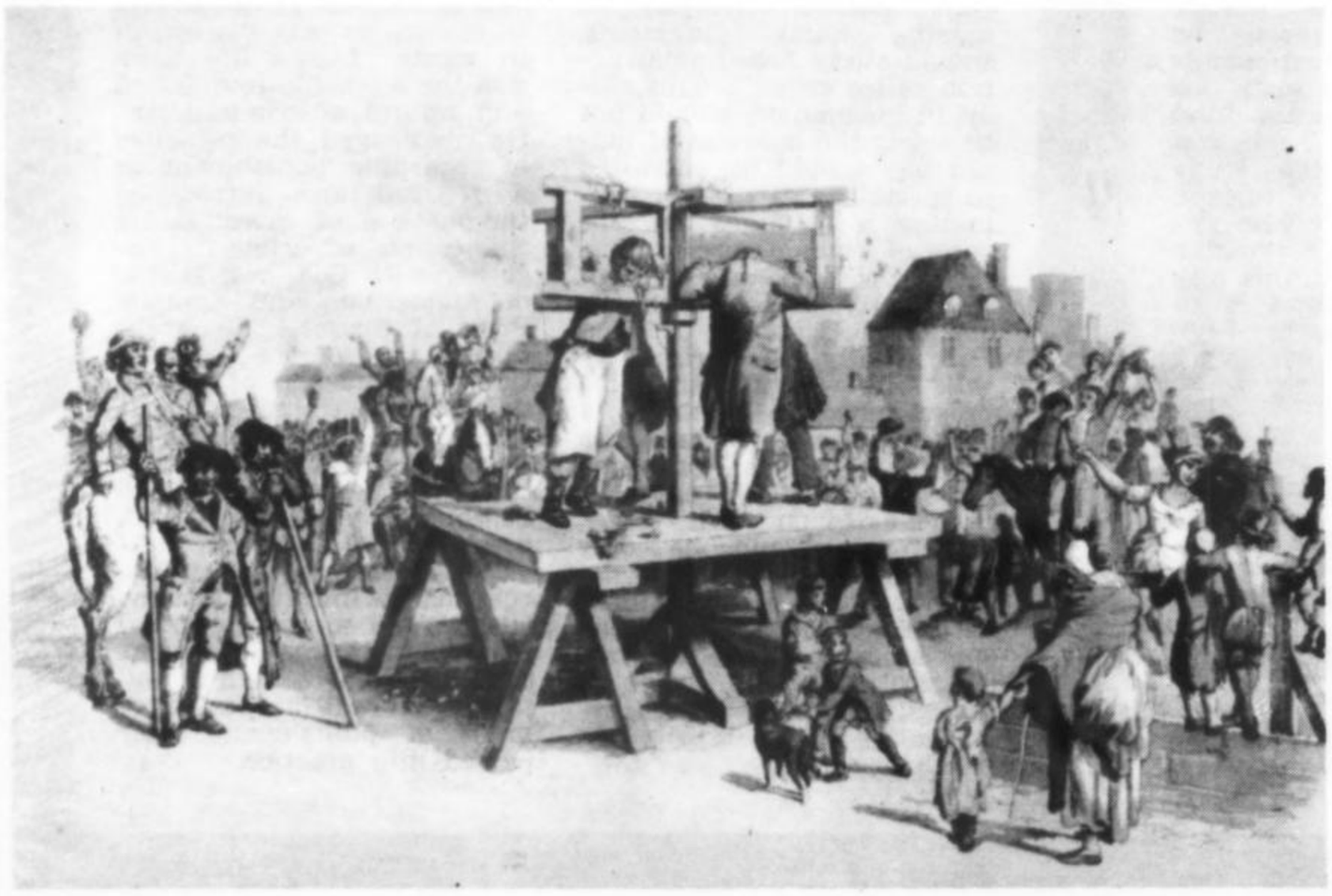
The first, opened in 1557 at St. Bride's Well, in London, gave the name "Bridewells" to others which were established during the next half century. These Bridewells were the earliest work-houses (or poor-houses as they were called in Scotland, and later in America.) The Poor Relief Act of 1601 directed the overseers of every parish to raise funds "for providing a convenient stock of flax, hemp, wool, thread, iron and other ware and stuff to set the poor on work." But in this early period authorities preferred to maintain "houses of correction" for the punishment of vagabonds.

Work-houses for the poor then began to be built on the Continent, especially in Germany and Holland in the century following 1560. But it was not until 1773 that the first North European workhouse which had the main characteristics of a modern prison —separate cells and work as a disciplinary and reformative measure—was built at Ghent, Belgium.



PAPAL PRISON of Saint Michael, built by Pope Clement XI in Rome, in 1704, was the first important prison to house inmates—in this case delinquent boys—in individual cells. Three tiers of ten cells lined up on both sides of a building whose centre was used as a workshop for the inmates. Thirty years later the papal authorities built a second prison designed on similar lines for delinquent women.

THE PILLORY was once a favourite form of punishment in England and the American Colonies. Pinned by wrists and head, offenders were jeered at and pelted with rotten eggs and vegetables.



Orphans herded with maniacs

IN the 17th and 18th centuries prisons were filthy, fever-breeding places in which men, women and children were crowded together without ventilation and with virtually no food except what friends provided or jailers sold. In the workhouses authorities herded together orphans,

old people, criminals, consumptives and maniacs in large open dormitories.

Already in the 17th century men and women were trying to improve conditions in the prisons and workhouses. One man who put his ideas into practice by personal example was Filippo Franci. A Catholic humanitarian, Franci first set up a small workhouse for unruly and vagrant boys in Florence, about 1650, and it was probably his work and also that of Dom Jean Mabillon, the great Benedictine scholar, which inspired Pope Clement XI in 1704 to create a prison for delinquent boys as part of the hospital of St. Michael in Rome.

What distinguished this prison from others of the period was its individual cells. These lined two sides of a large rectangular cell house, the centre space being used as a workshop by the inmates. Thirty years later the papal authorities made another innovation, building a prison on similar lines for delinquent women. These two prisons were the first to bear any close resemblance to those of today.

Breaking the shackles

NEW and more powerful forces were then set in motion by the wave of ideas which swept in with the Intellectual Revolution of the 17th and 18th centuries. The rationalism of The Enlightenment, as it was called, helped to break the shackles of political tyranny, and the humanitarianism inspiring this opposition to oppression carried over into agitation for penal reform and for the abolition of slavery. Barbarous criminal laws were attacked in the middle of the 18th century by Voltaire and also by Montesquieu, whose *Persian Letters* satirized the European criminal law of this period.

But the most influential reformer in the field of criminal law was the Italian nobleman, Cesare di Beccaria (1738-1794). His *Essay on Crimes and Punishments*, written in 1764, was probably the most effective book written in the whole history of criminal-law reform. Beccaria argued that the prevention of crime was more important than punishment; that torture should be abolished; that punishment should be used to deter men from committing crimes rather than to inflict social revenge on an individual; that imprisonment should replace corporal punishment and that capital punishment should be abandoned.

With the exception of psychology and psychiatry which have only recently been applied to crime, Beccaria suggested most of the essentials of criminological progress that have been achieved since his work was published nearly two centuries ago.

Beccaria's book created a veritable sensation. It was translated into a score of languages, and Voltaire himself wrote an anonymous preface for the French edition. Above all, it stimulated people to improve prison conditions in many lands, directly influencing several rulers including Catherine II, Empress of Russia and the Grand Duke of Tuscany, who abolished torture and capital punishment in his realm.

Beccaria's ideas inspired British reformers like Sir Samuel Romilly and Jeremy Bentham, and strongly influenced the revision of the criminal codes of the new American states after 1776, the new criminal code of Revolutionary France and the reform of the British criminal code in the first half of the 19th century.

One of the blackest chapters in the history of punishment concerns the penal colonies to which many countries at one time sent convicted men. Portugal sent many of its criminals to Ceuta in North Africa. As early as 1497 those from Spain were sent to the West Indian island of Hispaniola.

England made the greatest use of this form of punishment, but not as a humane substitute for other kinds. Shipping convicts out of the country was merely an easy way of solving the problem of keeping criminals in custody in England. It was considered convenient and economical and it provided a labour force for colonial areas. Until the American Revolutionary War put an end to penal colonies in North America convicts were sent from England to Maryland and other southern colonies—more than 50,000 of them between 1607 and 1776.

Then Australia provided a new "dumping ground" when it began to be opened up as a British colony. Between 1787 and 1852 more than 100,000 men and women were shipped in filthy vessels to the prison settlements of Australia, Tasmania and Norfolk Island. Many died en route, some starved to death in the colonies and others escaped to become "bushrangers" who attacked and robbed the colonists. Only after a British parliamentary inquiry had denounced the system as "unequal, without terror to the criminal class, corrupting to both convicts and colonists", was convict transportation abandoned.

The inhuman conditions in which convicts were shipped to Australia were no worse than those to which prisoners were subjected aboard the "floating prisons"—the old hulks anchored in British ports. These ships were filthy, crowded and constantly infested with disease.

RUNNING THE GAUNTLET was one of the brutal military punishments of the past in which a convicted man had to run stripped to the waist between two rows of soldiers who struck at him with a stick or a knotted cord. This drawing shows the punishment being inflicted in 18th century Austria. The victim was forced forward at the point of the bayonet, but prevented from passing too quickly between the ranks by a soldier preceding him with a reversed musket.

Credit for rousing the public conscience to the barbarism of such conditions belongs to John Howard, one of the greatest names in the history of prison reform.

Born in 1726, the son of well-to-do parents, Howard began his humanitarian work while in his twenties. In 1754, when he sailed to Portugal to aid earthquake victims in Lisbon he experienced the harsh prison conditions of his day after his ship had been captured by the French.

But it was in 1773 when, as high sheriff of Bedfordshire, he visited Bedford Jail that he fully realized the terrible conditions existing in his own country. Horrified by what he saw, he launched his great crusade at home and abroad, to expose the horrible misery which prisoners underwent.

Howard was particularly shocked by the injustice of the system of exacting fees for safe conduct and delivery from jail levied by the unsalaried prison officials. His efforts to obtain salaries for them brought Parliamentary action in 1774, and the disgraceful fee system was abolished. Thanks to Howard hundreds of innocent prisoners who had been unable to pay the delivery fees, were at last released. At his own expense Howard had the terms of the new legislation printed and sent to every jailer and warder in England.

Howard made four detailed inspections of British prisons and went abroad to study the conditions in those of Germany, France, the Low Countries and Switzerland. On his return he published *The State of the Prisons in England and Wales*. Other reforms were sparked by his revelations, including the passing of a bill for setting up penitentiary houses in which prisoners would be confined in cells and given work to do.

The sudden stirring of England's conscience by Howard's crusade was the dawn of prison reform which slowly developed into the modern humanitarian movement. Howard's name is commemorated today in the Howard League for Penal Reform, an active British organization.

'Hell above ground'

ANOTHER great Englishman who turned his brilliant mind to the problem of legal reform and prison conditions was Jeremy Bentham, philosopher, jurist and social reformer, who lived from 1748 to 1832. He drew up a scheme for the treatment of criminals under which he believed "morals would be reformed, health preserved, industry invigorated and instruction diffused", and also worked out plans for an entirely new prison.

A circular building with cells around the outside walls, this prison was known as the "Panopticon", or "inpection house" because of the ease with which the whole institution could be observed from a central position.

Early in the 19th Century a devoted band of English men and women, the "Prison Discipline Society", was resolutely carrying on the work launched by John Howard, in jails which were reported as "relapsing into their former horrid state of privation, filthiness, cruelty and neglect."

Among the worst of these jails was Newgate Prison in London, described

The revolt from outside

as a "hell above ground". Here, among the worst possible conditions, a young woman named Elizabeth Fry began a lifetime of work on behalf of the "victims" of prison systems.

By her amazing courage and personality she completely transformed conditions at Newgate and then went on to become the chief promotor of prison reform in Europe. Spurred on by her example the reformers in Britain campaigned successfully for what are now regarded as the first principles of a prison system—separation of the sexes, the classification of criminals, female warders for women, education and useful employment.

The Great Quaker Law

ELIZABETH FRY's investigations of other kinds of institutions brought about many improvements in the British hospital system and in the treatment of the insane. From 1838 to 1841 she travelled the Continent, urging authorities to improve their prisons, and before her death in 1845, she heard from most parts of Europe that her ideas were being adopted.

European successes in reforming criminal laws and making greater use of imprisonment as a punishment were actually preceded by a great reform of Quaker inspiration in one of the American colonies.

In early colonial times the Quakers were revolted by brutal corporal punishments, especially the shedding of blood, and in 1682 an important Quaker reform, "The Great Law", was submitted to the Pennsylvania Colonial Assembly by William Penn, the founder of the colony. For the first time in the history of criminal jurisprudence, it was here provided that the majority of crimes should be punished by "hard labour" in a house of correction.

In 1718 the Pennsylvania authorities were compelled to abandon this Quaker criminal code and to adopt those applied in the other colonies, but after Pennsylvania gained its independence in 1776, imprisonnment was again substituted for corporal punishment by a law of 1790 supported by the Philadelphia Prison Society—America's first prison reform society.

The man who gave great impetus to this movement was Dr. Benjamin Rush, physician, social reformer and pioneer penologist, and one of the most remarkable figures of his time. Dr. Rush, one of the signers of the American Declaration of Independence, was known to later generations as "The Father of American Psychiatry" for he wrote the first general study on this subject in America and raised the study of mental diseases to a scientific level for the first time in his country.

The famous reform group in Pennsylvania, of which Rush was a member, included Benjamin Franklin, William Bradford and other pioneers in American humanitarianism. It laid the foundations for the famous Pennsylvania prison system based on individual confinement in cells and work.

The system came to life in a block of cells built between 1790 and 1792 in the yard of the Walnut Street Jail, Philadelphia. This new type of prison, "the first American penitentiary" as it has been called, was an improvement on others of that time, but the cells were still rather grim places to judge from a description written in 1798:

"In every cell, there is one small window, placed high up and out of reach of the convict; the window well secured by double iron grating, so that, provided an effort to get to it was successful, the person could perceive neither heaven nor earth, on account of the thickness of the wall. The criminal, while confined here, is permitted no convenience of bench, table, or even bed, or anything else but what is barely necessary to support life, without risk of endangering health."

The confining of prisoners in individual cells became the guiding factor in prison construction. Authorities reasoned that solitude would lead to reflection and penitence—hence the name "penitentiary" for the earliest prisons. They also considered that separate confinement would prevent convicts from corrupting each other, with each one adding his own special knowledge of crime to the general cesspool of viciousness.

Soon the Pennsylvania system became world famous. A competing type—the Aubern system—provided for solitary confinement at night and for association in prison shops during the day. These two systems struggled for supremacy during the 19th century, and while the Aubern system won most favour in the United States, the Pennsylvania system was widely adopted in Europe.

New frontiers of thinking

PRISONS today are naturally very different places from those of even half a century ago. Treatment is generally less severe, prisoners are given more varied and useful work to do and education, athletics and entertainment all figure in the programme of a well-run modern prison.

But the "humanizing" of prison conditions is only one aspect of a broader and more significant change in the whole conception of crime and punishments which the findings of criminology are slowly bringing about.

No one, say modern criminologists, inherits "criminal tendencies", although people may inherit some quality which makes it easy for them to become criminals. Crime may show

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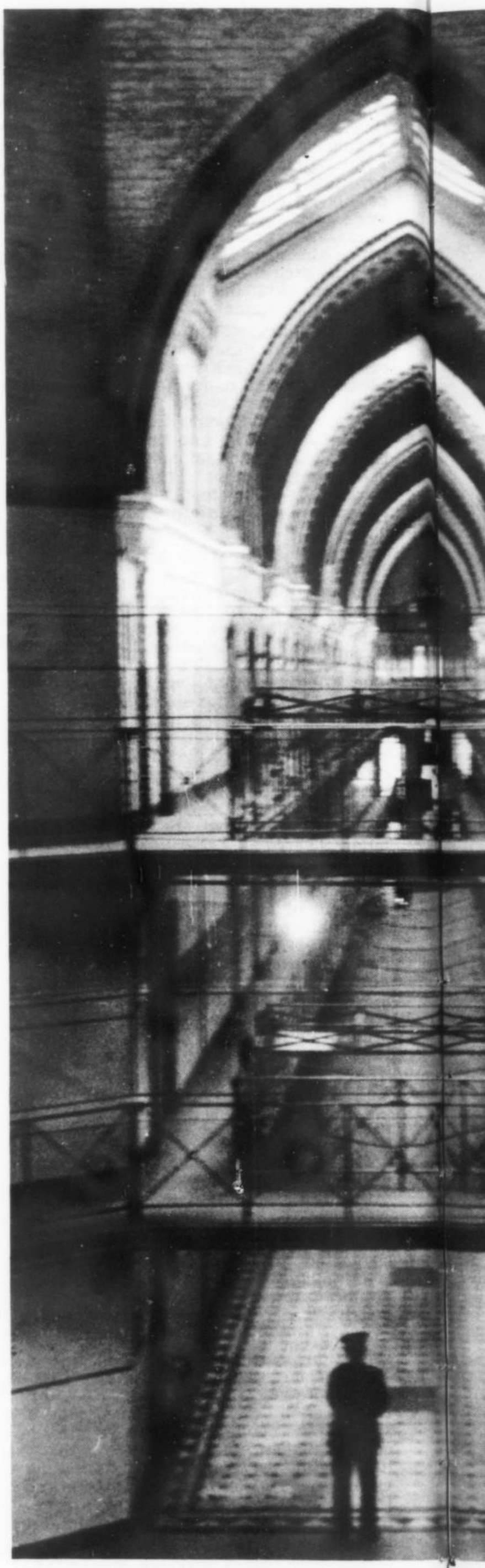

PRISON LIFE is largely conditioned by the surroundings in which the inmates serve their sentences and the staff works. Gloomy and forbidding buildings make it more difficult for prison administrators to apply rehabilitation training and less likely that prisoners will respond to it. Photo,

taken at Strangeways Prison, Manchester, England, shows one of the long cell galleries which radiate spoke-like from the hub of the control centre. Like many European prisons this one follows the style of prison construction which was conceived and first employed in Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

NEW ARRIVALS are interviewed, classified, given a uniform and allotted a cell. Others, sitting in cubicles, wait their turn to join Strangeways' population of 900 or so prisoners.

THE 'RUB DOWN' as prisoners call this search is a regular feature of prison life in Strangeways. All working parties are searched at the prison centre for scissors, knives, razorblades or anything else that might serve as a weapon or could be used as an escape tool.

TEDIOUS WORK being done by these prisoners consists of untying knots — "Strangeways love knots", as they call them—in Post Office string. Prisoners also shred mattress fibre and stitch mail bags—two mail bags every seven hours and forty minutes is the standard quota.

The man inside the criminal

(Continued from page 16)

the inability of the individual to deal with the world he lives in or the inability of society to provide a decent environment for all people. Crime is often caused by poverty, over-crowded living conditions, bad associations and accidental factors such as unemployment. The criminal may not be to blame for his crimes, therefore the idea of "punishment" is not an important one in modern criminology. Thus it disapproves of courts which seek to avenge society against the criminal and to "give him what he deserves."

Psychiatrists have joined criminologists in throwing light on the subject of crime and have provided useful techniques in dealing with criminals both in the courts and in prison. But often criminal practice and psychiatric theory are in complete conflict.

Guilt and punishment

PSYCHIATRISTS complain that criminal law, as practised today, is still guided by the idea of punishment and deterrence, that rehabilitation and reformation of the individual offender is secondary. The psychiatrist sees the problem of crime as one of treatment rather than of punishment. He approaches the offender as a patient, not as a prisoner; he is interested in the individual rather than the crime.

Does this imply the complete abolition of all unpleasant ways of dealing with offenders? No, say psychiatrists, for even under the best of systems disciplinary measures, such as confinement in institutions, would still be necessary. But such measures would be imposed primarily because they were felt to be necessary for the offender's own welfare and for the welfare of society, and not as punishment for an offence against the law.

Psychiatrists, psychologists, sociologists, criminologists and jurists have proposed a number of reforms to bring criminal procedure in line with present-day sociological and psychiatric knowledge.

They suggest, for instance, that a psychiatric service should be available to every criminal and juvenile court and to every penal and correctional institution, and that a psychiatric report should be made on every prisoner before he is released.

They have also proposed that in cases punishable by a prison sentence the question of responsibility should not be submitted to the jury. The jury's role would simply be to determine that the offence was committed by the defendant. The disposition and treatment (including punishment) would be based on a study of the individual offender by properly qualified and impartial experts co-operating with the courts. This means a complete separation of the "guilt-finding" and the "sentence-imposing" phases in court trials.

They feel that greater use should also be made of a flexible indeterminate sentence which allows for better individual treatment and release from prison when progress reports show that the prisoner is not likely to relapse into crime. They also call for a wider use among adults of the probation system so often employed in Anglo-Saxon countries for dealing with juvenile delinquents. Probation is usually applied in the case of a first offence or where there are extenuating circumstances. Punishment is suspended and treatment and guidance are given.

Progress in improving prison régimes and reforming criminal law during the past seventy or eighty years owes a great deal to the pioneer movement which began in 1872 when the first International Prison Congress met in London. This Congress declared "Moral regeneration should be the primary aim of prison discipline; hope should be more powerful than fear."

The International Prison Commission established by the Congress, and later called the International Penal and Penitentiary Commission (IPPC), set out to internationalize standards of treatment for offenders and its efforts led many nations to agree on basic conditions of imprisonment and methods of crime prevention. In 1951, the Commission became a Foundation devoted to scientific research and training in criminal science and policy.

Today the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders is regarded more than ever as an international problem and as an integral part of social defence policies. The United Nations has therefore taken over the work previously done by the IPPC and through the Social Commission of its Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and through the United Nations Specialized Agencies, is co-operating with the non-governmental organizations working in this field.

It has organized regional seminars and meetings of experts—lawyers, sociologists, judges, police officials, jurists, criminologists and many others—to study such subjects as probation, the indeterminate sentence, standard rules for the treatment of prisoners, the training of prison staffs, trends of crime, open institutions, and the prevention of juvenile delinquency.

The most recent of such meetings was held at Geneva in September 1954, when European experts in criminal policy gave practical guidance to countries on probation, prison labour and programmes for released prisoners.

Today's stumbling blocks

REAL progress in dealing with criminals and preventing crime is not likely to come, however, until the idea that crime cannot be prevented by repressive measures alone becomes more widely accepted by the public as a whole. Both national and international action to deal with the problem of crime as an inherent part of social defence programmes is still handicapped by out-of-date ideas still widely held. An ECOSOC report on social defence programmes published last year stressed the need for developing a new attitude towards crime as part of crime prevention policies.

"Existing systems of punishment still have an emotional content... in which segregation and counter agression play a dominant role", it said. "As long as this is not overcome, no real progress can be achieved."

WOMEN PRISONERS are given useful occupations in Holloway Prison, London. The largest women's prison in England, it was built in 1852 as a "House of Correction". Ideas on prisons and prison treatment having advanced since then, the

MORNING EXERCISE for the 500 inmates lasts half an hour. They walk singly or in little groups, on a stone path round a grass lawn. On one side they see the prison building, on the other, the prison walls

BATH-TIME for babies who are passing the first months of their lives in prison. Some were born there, others came in when their mothers were sentenced. The babies spend the daytime in the hospital ward, and the night in their mothers' cells.

THE DOOR TO FREEDOM opens for a woman prisoner. Modern efforts to improve prison conditions and rehabilitate offenders are based on the knowledge that practically all people who spend a term in prison will one day return to society.

old building is far from adequate for present-day standards. Prisoners make radio parts, stitch mail-bags, mend shoes or work in the kitchen, laundry, hospital or garden. In summer, parties are taken out of the prison to work on farms near London.

PASSING THOUGHTS ON THE RIGHT TO LIFE AND THE DEATH PENALTY

by

Georges Fradier

No man ever asserts his right to life except, perhaps, the man who is threatened by death. And even he does so in secret, because he is ashamed and also because he does not know to whom he could talk about it aloud.

Yet the Universal Declaration of Human Rights maintains, in Article 3, "Everyone has the right to life..." The phrase is somewhat disturbing. There's nothing obscure in it. But the reader can always add... "the right to life, except when it is refused by justice."

Society tells the condemned man: "Your crime deserves the death penalty. We are suppressing your right to life." Society has good reasons: it has every intention of defending itself against the forces of evil—that is, crime—which might endanger it.

So the right to life isn't absolute. In certain cases, it is wiped off the list of rights. This isn't very simple, mind you. For if I give my children the right to use my library and I discover one day that they've torn my books, I can revoke that right. He who gives can take away. Is it society, therefore, which grants the right to life? From whom did the condemned man receive his life?

The condemned man is nearly always a murderer. His victim too, had the right to life. The condemned man is an individual who, one day, from the depths of his passion, his pride or his greed—or from the depths of his terror—decreed the annihilation of another. He made himself a tyrant. Either calmly or in maniacal fury, he set up a reign of selfishness for his own benefits.

At the time of his deed—or, at least, at the mysterious moment when he decided to commit it—he plunged into an abyss where no rights and no laws can exist. He chose savagery of his own will. Can he then dare to demand the privileges of a free man? Human Rights didn't worry him very much when he killed. They belonged to a kingdom from which he exiled himself. Therefore, it would seem hopeless to try to save him today by invoking the principles which he sought to destroy yesterday.

But, in reality, it is in the name of these very principles that he will be judged, for society considers the old law of "an eye for an eye" as barbarous. Once he has been imprisoned, the fiercest bandit alive is no longer an outlaw. The verdict is pronounced on a crime... but it is a man who must serve the sentence.

Is it completely certain that this man can be gagged if he decides to talk about his right to life? Supposing he discovers the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and then pleads guilty. He might say: "I have violated the most important rights on this list and there is nothing in it which absolves me of my responsibility. But it doesn't absolve you of yours. It does not allow me to drag you down into *my* world of darkness. This list bears witness to a respected code of values. I have flouted it on one occasion and now you are making me answer to it. You are on the side of justice and I appeal to the justice of the Universal Declaration. I read here : "Every man has the right to life." These words are overwhelmingly against me. But now *you* read them yourselves."

Society protects itself... Scciety condemns... It is too easy to hide behind society. We are society... you, me and the rest of us. The criminal is precisely the man who tried tc leave society. Now he has been brought back. It is I who am protecting myself, and it is I who condemn.

Happily, I can delegate my powers to a proxy. This enables me to hold forth calmly over an after-dinner cup of coffee on the pros and cons of the death penalty. Of course, there are some very sound arguments on both sides... the way things stand today and with the evidence available, we shouldn't jump to conclusions... our children will find the answer... the tide of human progress, etc., etc... You and I, we're independent We're neither judges nor criminals.

Independent? And what about those judges who believe that they condemn in our name? And they're right: in law, they speak for us. In reality, too. The condemned man stares out from his cell. He sees not only the judge who sentenced him, but unconscious judges as well—ourselves. Can it be said that we, as judges, are hypocrites?

Courts, gallows and flames from the stake. During the Middle Ages, so we're told, judges condemned right and left. In the 18th century, too, witches and thieves were handed over to the hangman. Our fathers did not ask themselves the same questions that we do about the death penalty. It wasn't that they considered human life cheap. But the problem of life and of death was clearer to them than it is to us and, if I dare put it this way, less serious. Society today

cannot tell itself that it kills the body of a criminal to save his soul. No one talks about the defendant's soul in the criminal courts. It's true that they don't say much about his body, either. Instead, they analyse his psychology... which is neither a concrete thing nor an immortal one.

So the judges in the Middle Ages never worried about excuses (Middle Ages—a handy expression to designate societies bound by belief in the sacred, as opposed to our modern civilizations which claim to be purely human). These judges believed that they had a duty to punish and scourge. In the death penalty, the word "penalty" took on its full meaning. It meant that the scales of Justice would swing back into balance. The criminal atoned for his deed—that is, he purged himself of his sin by undergoing punishment. At one stroke, he washed away the stain which he had left on society, and the stain which he had placed on his soul.

"Send a criminal into the next world"... "He has paid the supreme penalty for his crime"... There was a time when there was nothing shameful in these phrases. They had a meaning, and they gave a meaning to the penalty.

Yet even today after an execution some journalists still describe the criminal as having "paid his debt to society." Do their readers feel they have now been repaid?

In several countries, the courts cling to the terrifying and imposing garb of sacred justice: black robes, red robes, wigs, etc. And they keep their solemn and barely intelligible language. The death sentence is pronounced in the name of the people, or in the name of the king or in the name of the constitution.

Who are these people who demand a corpse? Where are they? In the eyes and in the mind of the condemned man, what is this constitution suddenly turned into an instrument of vengeance, and what is this law which demands satisfaction?

Executions, however, are no longer a public spectacle. Proclaimed pompously, virtuously and publicly, the penalty must now be carried out stealthily and quickly at dawn. There can be no crowd to watch the execution. Even the jurymen are not invited. When they answered the fateful questions, they knew, of course, what their replies meant, but no one asked them to *imagine* the result. And, at the moment of this result, no one shall disturb their slumbers. So all of these weeks of questioning and testimony and eloquence and headlines, these weeks of drama and stage direction finish in the furtive half-hour of an official and shameful execution. During the trial, with the help of modern means of publicity, thousands of actors participated in the drama. At the finale, there are only three or four. All that the others will do is to read a brief paragraph absent-mindedly in an afternoon newspaper.

Before a man can declare himself for or against the death penalty, let him first climb the barrier of abstractions surrounding it and tear away the curtain of verbiage. He is not reaching a decision which, once taken, can be put out of mind; not discussing a theory, but death itself —the final physical act. Let him try to understand the reasons (they must be terribly convincing) which oblige us to kill a man calmly and deliberately.

Is it impossible for the honest citizen, the good husband, the kind father, the pillar of society, to put himself for a moment into the shoes of the condemned man? Is it impossible for him to visualize himself in a death cell and to tell himself: "I am not a criminal. I was when I committed this crime (this murder, or this rape, or this crime against the State, or this theft, depending on where he lives and the laws of his land) but since then, months (or years) have passed and I have changed the way everyone changes. I am no longer the same man. Which man are you condemning? Besides, you do not even seek to know me for what I am..." Is it impossible for this innocent man to understand why so many condemned criminals protest their innocence? Yes, there's no doubt—it's impossible.

At least, every man should be able to imagine himself in the jury box or on the judge's bench. But that only means that he would be called upon to make his decision on the basis of his knowledge... knowledge of law, of philosophy, of anthropology, etc. The one thing that he will not have time to examine is the right to life, the right of "John Smith" to his life, a life as humble, as dangerous, as sad, as miserable and as mediocre as you care to imagine it, but the infinitely precious life of the man who does not want to die. No he will not be able to examine this life... there are too many abstractions in the way.

You're *against* the death penalty? That's easily said, you know. Have you ever seen the victim of a murderer? Are you capable of imagining the horrors committed by certain killers? We are always ready to speak without knowing, and without engaging our responsibilities. How many opponents of the death penalty changed their minds the day they suddenly became "interested parties" and had to offer a personal opinion.

Are you *for* the death penalty? Are you ready to replace the executioner—replace him officially with all of the dignity of his profession? When a man has good and honourable reasons to demand the life of another man of whom he knows almost nothing, he certainly should find the courage to go and take that life himself. Why should such a just and salutary task be left to obscure mercenaries?

If the right to life is not an absolute right, if it must be accompanied by restrictions which vary according to time and place, then what right can we count on? Is there any one right which we can assert under any circumstances?

Not one, but all of these rights must be asserted so that all of them may become absolute. For all of these rights stem from a single postulate—Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and in rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood".

Deny or neglect this postulate... and the rest is just a joke.

A BOY IN TROUBLE...

by Dr. J. R. Rees

Director, World Federation for Mental Health

IN many countries of the world there is at present a wave of concern about juvenile delinquency. It has been on the increase, although now the peak seems to have been passed. There is little doubt, however, that more cases of anti-social behaviour and crime are brought to public notice now than in past years.

The explanation of this in part is that more cases are reported now and that the police of all countries are more inclined to take notice of violations of the law both by children and young people.

In addition to this there have been marked disturbances created by two world wars—and there always is a rise of delinquency rates following a war. The dislocation of the social life of many countries during the recent war has certainly contributed to the increase of delinquency. Children have not had the same settled, secure home life. Mothers have had to go out to work, fathers have in many cases been away for long periods in the fighting services, and this has created a situation which was likely to result in anti-social reactions among children.

The moods of anxiety and moral disapprobation of delinquency always stimulate the consideration of special factors which are regarded as being "the cause" of delinquency. Lessening of the religious sense, lack of moral teaching, the more permissive techniques of child upbringing and education, and the effects of films, television and comic strips, have all been blamed. They may of course play some part in the encouragement of anti-social behaviour, and all should be kept in mind, because something could be done about them. Scientifically speaking, there is no clear evidence to justify the statement that these are causative factors to any large extent.

'Hit them hard' school

SAMUEL Butler, when he wrote Erewhon, displayed extraordinary vision in his fantasy that the development of physical sickness was something which should be punished, and that anti-social behaviour necessitated medical treatment. Few people took this very seriously, but there was in between the two world wars a certain swing towards this point of view, and an excessive tendency to claim that delinquents could not help being as they were, and that treatment should always take the place of punishment. This swing of the pendulum, as in all such cases, was not wise, and the present attitude of criminologists, psychiatrists and psychologists is more realistic and better balanced with regard to both the causation and the treatment of delinquency.

As always, there are three attitudes towards those who disobey the rules of the community. First, we can dismiss them as being degenerates, people whose genetic inheritance has decreed that they shall be criminals, who must therefore be excluded as rapidly as possible from society. Secondly, there is the very vocal school, which is not only composed of the elderly and the pompous, which says: "Hit them hard. Give them the most rigorous punishment that can be devised." The third attitude, least emotional and best balanced, sees that there can be no effect without a cause; there is no child who is *just* naughty, no adolescent who is *just* delinquent, or adult who is *just* a criminal.

No spiritual aspirin tablet

IF we are to protect society and help the individual, then we must of necessity understand something of the causes and background which have given rise to the particular conduct of which society properly disapproves. Diagnosis should precede treatment. The doctor who merely treats symptoms without attempting to understand the underlying cause of the condition is a quack or a charlatan. The parent, the teacher or the magistrate who treats disorders of social behaviour without concerning himself about the reasons for that behaviour can also quite properly be called a charlatan. There is no spiritual or legal aspirin tablet which will cure every disorder.

Much careful research is being made into the fundamental causes of anti-social behaviour, and the U.N. Economic and Social Council, Unesco and the World Health Organization are making their contribution to this exceedingly important problem. There can, of course, be factors of bad inheritance which we must consider, but the geneticists have not produced as yet any very convincing evidence that the tendency to crime is inherited, though clearly many defects and limitations of personality may be passed on. There is no real conflict between the importance of heredity and environment. We should think always of nature *and* nurture, for both play their part.

The problem of delinquency is part of the much wider problem of mental and emotional ill-health, and over the past thirty or forty years we have become increasingly aware of many factors of importance. We know, for example, that the general management of small children from infancy upwards is very important, that good standards and ideals for life and conduct must be *shown* to them by the adults with whom they are in contact, rather than *given* to them as mere dogmatic statements. Children are essentially imitative. The child whose parents spend time in reading the more lurid crime and sex stories in the press is obviously more likely to be attracted by the "horror" comics than he would otherwise be.

We know that every child needs some rules laid down for it, or it will feel insecure, and we know, too, that every child needs to have sensible and wise discipline, which must be maintained. Spoiling and indulgence is exceedingly unfair to the child. We know that the threat of a penalty to be incurred by some particular act can be very harmful if in fact the penalty is never imposed. In the past, children used to be told that the devil or the policeman would get them if they did what was wrong. Nowadays they are told that they will suffer some

★ **YOUNG OFFENDER.** Parents wait anxiously at door of Juvenile Court in Italy while young offender hears verdict. Although many countries still apply Stone Age methods to punish juvenile delinquents, enormous progress has been made since the enlightened English jurist of the 18th century, Sir William Blackstone, could write: "Under seven years of age...an infant cannot be guilty of felony...but at eight years old he may be guilty of felony." (Unesco Photos by D. Seymour.)

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...what can we do to help him ?

deprivation, of pocket money, or sweets, or something else that they value, if they are not good. But if nothing happens children often distrust their parents and feel thrown back on their own resources to get what they want for themselves just when they want it.

These points of view imply better education for those who have or are going to have children, and if we are patient a lot can be done, and it can be done in the home—which is the right place. Let it never be thought that the so-called scientific approach to delinquency implies that every child who is naughty or anti-social must be referred to a doctor or to a clinic. There can be no easy evasion of the responsibility of parents, teachers or others.

We are probably getting nearer to truly causative factors when we recognize that in disciplining or administering the proper form of punishment, however slight it may be, to a child, or indeed to an adult who has offended against the rules of society, we should always make it clear that we strongly disapprove of the anti-social conduct, but that we do not disapprove of the individual who has made these mistakes; that we respect and love him or her just as much as ever. Punishment becomes meaningful in this way, it does not create rebellion nor a sense of exclusion and insecurity, as often occurs in the individual who is made to feel that he is bad and outcast.

For many years physicians and others who have tried to deal with individual cases of delinquency have said that the commonest cause of stealing is a sense of being unloved. Because this sounds rather an unusual statement, we must look into it a little more closely.

The child in a broken home, or who is immured in an old-fashioned type of orphanage, may suffer from a genuine lack of interest and love. He may lack a sense of nearness and the feeling that he matters to someone and is respected. Equally, the child who has had too much demonstration of love and affection, who has been unwisely indulged and become spoilt, may, if he becomes demanding and tiresome, which is quite natural, be dealt with by irritated adults in too strict and arbitrary a fashion, and he will then have a great sense of insecurity and considerable resentment. This is the type of child who very often decides that since he is no longer loved or liked, he must "go it alone", he must get what he wants for himself, and certainly can disregard the teaching and the standards of those who have let him down.

This is logical, and is the explanation of a good deal of delinquency in its beginnings. Many things in the process of our police system, courts and reformatory institutions tend to add to exactly these difficulties, and consequently they have led to recidivism and to the development of an anti-social life.

In the past few years some very significant research has been done in a number of countries throughout the world, of which the most valuable

A BOY IN TROUBLE
(cont'd)

Forced to 'go it alone'

examples have been collected together in a book called *Mental Health and Maternal Care.* (1) These collected facts make it clear that in a large number of cases the child who is in the first three years of its life deprived of that love and security that every child needs, which comes primarily from its mother or mother substitute, is likely to develop a deep sense of insecurity, and indeed, to suffer a distortion of personality which can never be fully corrected in later life.

Children who are deprived, whether by a true lack of love, by the broken home, or by enforced absence from their mothers, have a tendency to grow up as embittered individualists, unable to love or to accept love and friendship from other people. Their feeling of insecurity provides a persistent difficulty throughout their lives which makes them more liable to irrational anxiety, and they may have an increased liability to physical ill-health.

Many of these children as they grow up, looking for something to enhance their status, and for companionship, drift into gangs or undesirable groups which lead them to develop their delinquent traits, and a good deal of the juvenile crime of today occurs in young people of this kind. There is a high incidence of this type of privation of love and security in the histories of juvenile delinquents.

Clearly harsh punitive treatment of children like this will give them an increased sense of their "badness" and their abnormality and add to the inferiority feelings, the sense of isolation and the general grudge against society and life they already have.

The medicine most needed in the world to-day, whether for individual children who are difficult, for adults, in the family or industry, and for nations, is love, and then more love.

By love, one means interest, respect for people and their rights—which implies no lack of firmness and no sentimentality. There is far more sentimentality and emotionalism displayed often by those who punish delinquents in the Courts or elsewhere than one can find in the average children's psychological clinic.

What, therefore, do we need at this present time to deal with our young delinquents? Certainly we need to give help and better instruction to those who are going to have children, to those who have them, and to those who teach them. We need much better training in the science of penology and the understanding of these cases for those who are going to be children's magistrates or judges of adult courts. Far too often people are put into these positions because they are skilled in the arguments of defence or prosecution, but without any true appreciation of the personalities of the people with whom they have to deal.

Similarly, better instruction is needed for the probation services, where these exist, and for the police. Better provision is needed in most countries for the observation and investigation of children before any court action is taken. We need on the preventive side to have far greater encouragement of parent-teacher associations in connection with schools, of youth organisations of all kinds, which provide outlets for healthy occupation and interest. We need far more continuing serious research into the nature and the handling of our problems. Lastly, and most important, we need more real respect for children and their rights and more love of a wise, continuing kind.

(1) By Dr. John Bowlby. - Published by the World Health Organization.

PROBATION is now the preferred method of treatment of juvenile offenders in the U.S. and Canada, according to a recent U. N. Survey on Juvenile Delinquency in North America. But despite the many "model" training schools and detention homes, the U. N. report adds that in many respects many "even today have not progressed far beyond their early limitations as a kind of futile 'cold storage' for troublesome youngsters." (USIS.)

BRECOURT

Where the gate is always open

A SPECIAL REPORT

Prepared under the direction of GUY SINOIR, French Ministry of Justice

TEXT BY DANIEL BEHRMAN
PHOTOS DENISE COLOMB

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There is nothing outside the gate of Brecourt to indicate that it is a "public institution of supervised education" —or, to really call a spade a spade, a reform school for girls.

There is only a stone post and weathered letters which simply announce "Chateau de Brecourt". Twenty-five miles northwest of Paris, Brecourt lies in the pastoral setting of a valley on the edge of the Beauce, France's great bread-basket plain. It might be a rich man's country estate (it was until the previous owner was found to be a spy during World War II) but for one peculiarity: you can walk into Brecourt—and out of it —a good deal easier than into anyone's country estate.

There is nothing inside its gate, either, to tell you that Brecourt is a reform school. Brecourt is the living proof of an experiment that began in 1944 to try a new tack on the old problem of what to do with juvenile delinquents.

With the blessings of the French Ministry of Justice, two women, Dominique Riehl and Genevieve Boutault, took over a reform school at Cadillac, near Bordeaux, a 16th century chateau where young inmates had been locked into individual cells at night. At Cadillac, they opened the doors and, despite a grim setting and wartime austerity, their methods worked. In 1947, they moved to Brecourt with Miss Riehl as director of the "public institution", and Miss Boutault as her assistant director.

Today, there are 60 girls from 14 to 21 years of age at Brecourt (when a new building is completed in November there will be 40 more). Their story is the same drab tale of juvenile delinquency the world over with nothing to appeal to lovers of detective novels.

Nearly always, it is a story of delinquent parents (statistics show that divorce, separation and shattered homes cause 95 per cent of the 18,000 cases of juvenile delinquency reported annually in France). The girl who is picked up for petty theft, vagrancy or prostitution and sent to Brecourt by a children's court judge is not a hardened enemy of society. She merely chose an easy way out of a hard lot.

"Girls get into trouble much less often than boys, but when they do,

BRECOURT

(Continued)

THE WORLD WATCHES Brecourt and the school is seldom without visiting students and observers from abroad. Here, a young Brazilian psychologist studying its methods samples the cooking.

FUTURE DRESSMAKERS ply their needles in a sunny room of what was once a rich man's country home near Paris. Brecourt's delinquent

THAT PARISIAN LOOK in hand-embroidered blouses takes years of patient practice. Gifted

the cause is much more deeply-rooted and harder to get at", Miss Boutault told me inside the ivy-covered mansion that now serves as Brecourt's main building. She was a sturdy, handsome woman with iron-grey streaks in her hair and a frank note in her voice. I was willing to believe she had done nothing during her life except run a country home for five dozen youngsters until I learned that she also had a doctorate in law.

"The emotional problem is much more important for girls", she explained. "Teaching them a trade and keeping them busy are not enough—you have to prepare them for marriage which, after all, is the best solution."

This means creating a normal environment, which is exactly what Brecourt sets out to do, concentrating on two main goals—a thorough training in useful trades, and the creation of a healthy family atmosphere. There is no marching and there are no uniforms. There are no rows of iron beds in a chill barracks and there is no cheerless mess hall.

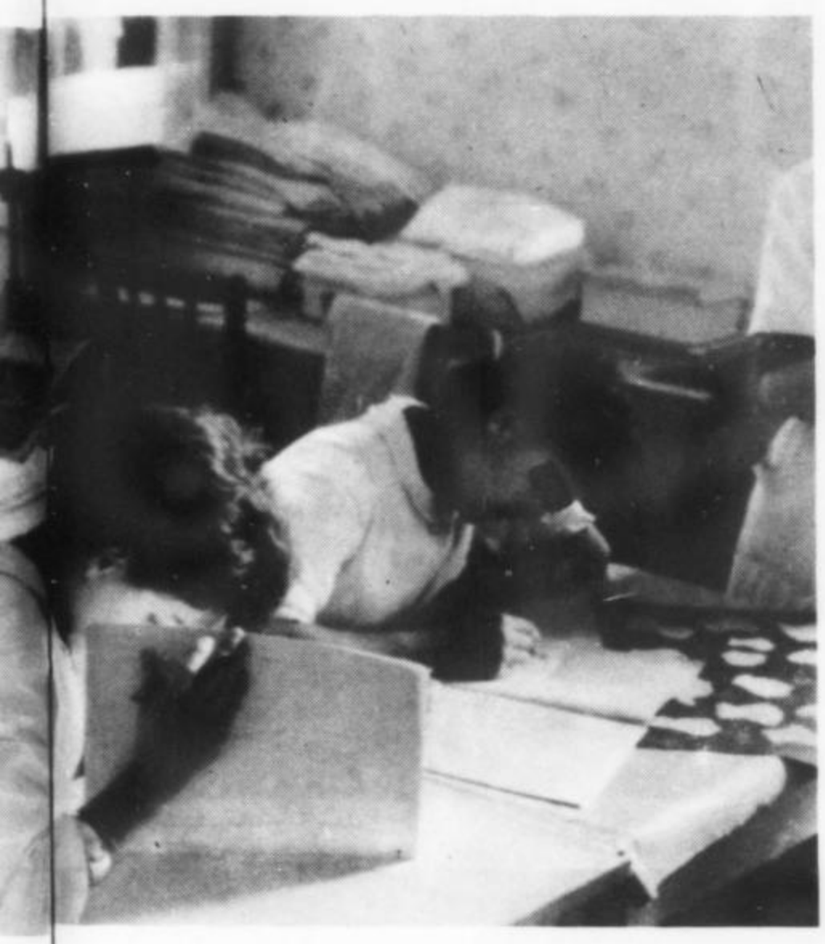
The pupils of Brecourt—Miss Boutault will only refer to them as pupils —live in groups of eight. Each group has its own apartment, its own dining room, and its own "educator", the title of the devoted woman who is assigned to each group. She lives with her group, she eats with it and she shares its problems. The girls do not call her "mother", but she is the nearest thing to a mother that an institution could provide. And the group, all too often, is the nearest thing to a normal family that these girls have ever known.

Miss Boutault took me through the home of the La Grappe group (grappe means a bunch of grapes in French). A raffia painting made by one of the girls lent a spot of colour to the walls of the dining room. In the bathroom, there were four wash basins—one to two girls—compartmented off for privacy. The bedroom sparkled with gay cretonne bedspreads. One girl had placed a souvenir Eiffel Tower at the head of her bed; another a plush donkey. Dolls were common. Though all in their teens, the girls of Brecourt cling to a childhood of which they have had only a fleeting glimpse.

"They're a lively bunch, La Grappe", Miss Boutault commented. "You see, each 'educator' seems to stamp her personality into her group... the Gerbes are probably a little quieter and less impulsive. We try to fit each girl into the group best suited to her character.

During this visit, the apartments

girls live to learn their trades—so much so the some refuse to leave before completing the courses they are given.



girls in Brecourt's embroidery classes are taught to work from their own designs.

THE LAUNDRY ROOM is not a chore but another class where girls are taught the tricks of hand-ironing. Naturally, they learn by doing their own washing.

were empty but Miss Boutault still took care to keep me and my notebook out of sight. "These are girls, not guinea pigs," she had said and politely, but firmly, refused to allow any staged photographs during my visit.

The apartments were empty because the girls were in their classes. To most of the outside world, Brecourt is known simply as the Public Institution of Professional Training and, unless Miss Boutault told you otherwise, you could not tell the difference between Brecourt and a modern trade school with boarding facilities for its students.

Every girl at Brecourt learns a trade, depending upon her aptitudes. She can be taught stenography, or dress-making, or hair-dressing or even farming but, when she leaves, she takes the same examination in Paris or in nearby Pontoise as the pupils in any trade school. Her "certificate of professional aptitude," too, is the same as that given to any other successful candidate. It bears no mention of her stay in an "institution", nor does she have a black mark in a police record ...or, in fact, any police record at all.

Recently, Miss Riehl and Miss Boutault made a study of what had happened to 100 girls who had graduated from Brecourt ("graduated" is the right word—often a girl asks to stay to complete her training). It showed that 70 were doing well—married or holding jobs. Twenty had dropped out of sight (once a girl is over 21, she no longer needs to report to probation officers) and 10 per cent were not leading what Miss Boutault termed "a regular life".

(Continued on page 29)

170 ACRES OF LAND make Brecourt almost self-sufficient. Some girls are trained as future farm workers, but all receive an introduction to country life in the school's gardens and in its model barns.

Re-education: plenty of faith and fe

UNIFORMS ARE TABOO for the school's sixty pupils who work and live in the sort of setting which might well be the envy of any girl's trade school anywhere.

THE LOST CHILDHOOD of a Brecourt girl (authorities estimate that 95 per cent of juvenile delinquency is rooted in shattered homes) is reflected in the dolls to which she clings even in her 'teens. Brecourt girls live in small "family" groups. A group bedroom is shown here.

A CAREER WITH A CURLING IRON is very much in demand at Brecourt whose beauty salon is always full. Even the school's directors have their hair done there.

few illusions

(Continued from page 27)

Not one, however, had turned to crime. "Ten per cent of failures... that's quite a good margin of error in any school", she commented.

One reason for these results probably lies in the "open-door" policy applied to Brecourt's 170 acres of parks, woods and farmlands (occasionally, a game poacher from a nearby village is flushed). Girls are often sent unaccompanied on errands or else visit parents in Paris on Sundays, taking the bus by themselves. There are about half a dozen "escapes" a year, but they are not planned "jail-breaks". A girl might walk out of the gate on an impulse—but she nearly always comes back of her own free will.

None of this should give the impression that teen-agers are pampered at Brecourt. Suzanne or Therese in La Grappe or Le Nid begins her day at 6.45. From 8 a.m. to noon, she is in her trade class and she goes back there from 2.30 to 5.15. She has leisure, but it is organized. Idleness, the plague of prison systems, has been scoured out of a day at Brecourt.

Sweet-tooth and nest-egg

THERE is nothing to stop Suzanne from indulging her sweet-tooth, either. While the girls are trained for their future professions, they earn money, part of which is put aside to constitute a nest-egg when they leave Brecourt and part of which they receive as a weekly allowance. Here, too, another effort has been made to prevent the school from taking on the heartless character of an "institution". After all, the old reform-school with its cells and its uniforms could serve only as a preparatory school for prison later on. The purpose of Brecourt, on the other hand, is to prepare its girls for life.

The girls are sturdy and well fed. They prepare their own meals with a diet based upon Brecourt's farm production (the day I was there, pupils were eating veal chops, the last of a series of veal menus which followed the killing of a calf). Physical culture is an important part of their programme—all the more so because it demands a mental as well as a physical effort. As we watched a group playing volleyball, I noticed that one girl was wearing a skirt instead of shorts.

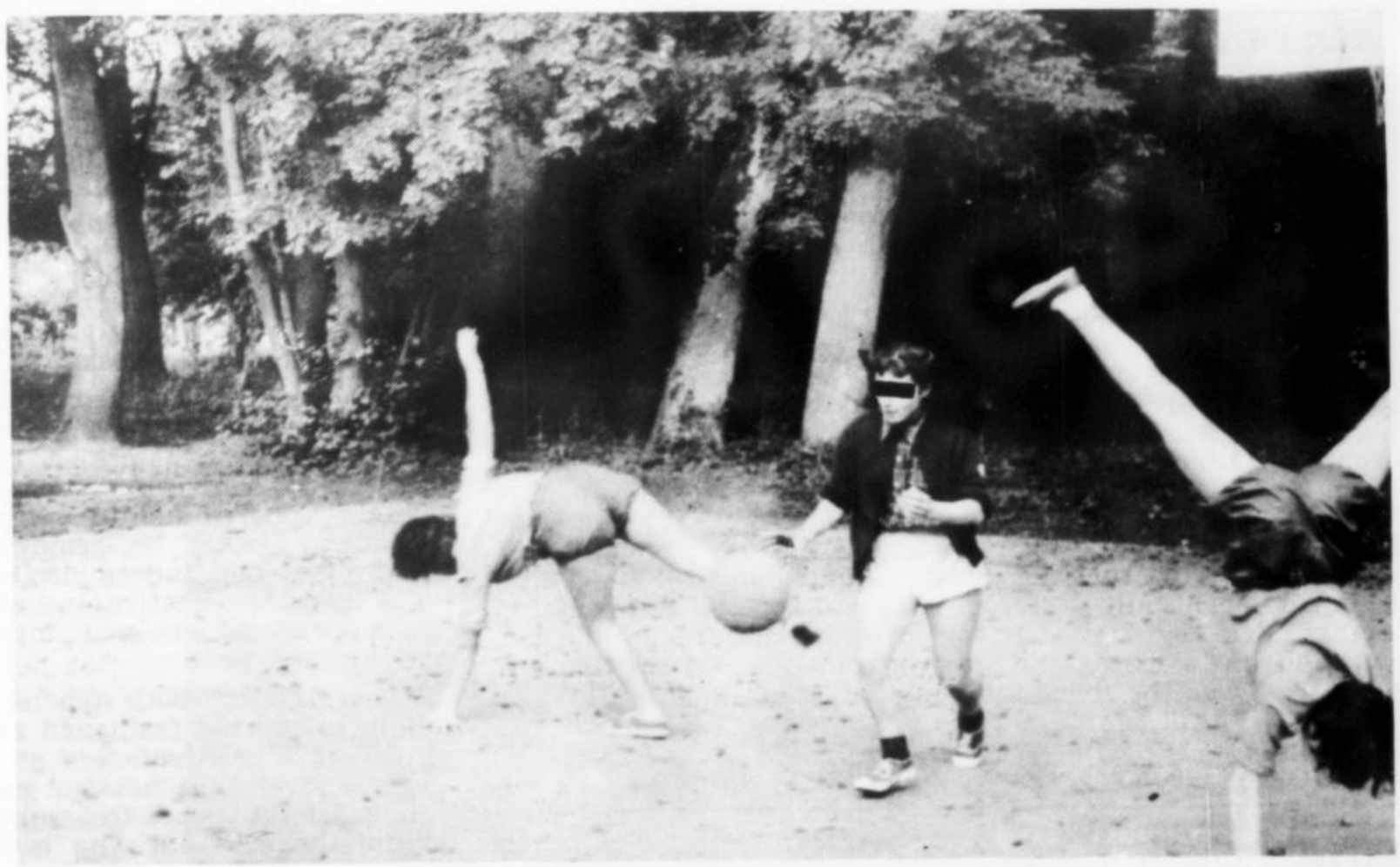
"It's taken us a year and a half to get her interested in sports", commented Miss Boutault. "Now that we've come this far, the shorts can wait a little longer."

Teachers want to learn

PERHAPS the most amazing feature of the way Brecourt is run is the absence of any dogmatic system. Miss Riehl, Miss Boutault and their staff of six "educators" and six trade instructors are always willing to learn. "In re-education, you never can say that you know the answers... because that means you are suffering from an intellectual hardening of the arteries", said the assistant director.

In one respect, Brecourt runs contrary to methods used in certain other countries where psychiatric treatment is stressed. Of course, Brecourt makes use of educational psychology, but its directors—and French rehabilitation authorities in general—feel that the methods of the psychoanalyst are more valuable in treating children at home than girls living the life of a boarding school type of institution.

"There's no formula in this work," commented Miss Boutault. "In re-education, you must have a large quantity of faith... and a small quantity of illusions."



THE MENTAL SIDE of sports is just as important as the exercise in Brecourt's programme. French educators believe it serves an invaluable role by demanding an effort of willpower from girls who had once chosen an easy way out of difficulties. But to get the girls interested in sport often calls for plenty of patience.

Frances

a tragedy that might have been prevented

by Sir Cyril Burt

IN dealing with physical disorders it has become increasingly recognized that prevention, wherever possible, is far better than cure. The same holds true of delinquency and crime. To illustrate how urgently such measures are needed, let me start with a single case—typical of a vast number—in which cure proved impossible, but prevention would probably have achieved success.

Frances, when I first saw her, was a tall and attractive girl of fifteen and a half, who might almost have sat as a model for Greuze. With her long fair hair, flushed cheeks, and well-developed bust, she looked much older than her age. She was born in a London slum a couple of years before the outbreak of the war; and, when her father was called up and her mother found work in a munitions factory, Fanny (as her family called her) was evacuated with her older brother and sister to a farm in Somerset. Here she ran wild, and by the age of seven had become the terror of the village children.

Returning to London at the end of the war, she proved to be exceedingly backward in her lessons; but, apart from a tendency to giggle, chatter, and occasionally weep, she gave no serious trouble in the classroom. At the age of eleven she was reported to the police for stealing money from a confectioner's till, and referred by the magistrate to a child guidance clinic. From the case-file it appears that she had been regularly pilfering at home for three or four years. The father was described as a rough and drunken dock labourer, constantly quarrelling with his wife, whom he eventually deserted. The mother was an excitable woman, who had freely consorted with other men while her husband was overseas and was constantly in debt. 'Non-co-operative', was the social visitor's final remark.

After the change from country to town, Frances' own health had steadily declined; and, with a few imaginary touches of her own, she succeeded in presenting a pathetic picture of weak and pretty innocence, neglected by her parents and misled by bad companions. At first the attitude of those who saw her was pity rather than reproof or punishment. Later more drastic measures were tried—docking her pocket money, corporal chatisement at home and at school, daily sessions with a psychoanalyst, and ultimately removal to a convalescent home, from which she absconded.

After leaving school, she was dismissed from one job after another. At her last, she took a bundle of five-pound notes from the cashier's desk, and vanished from sight. The police found her three weeks later, living in a Liverpool lodging-house with a Portuguese sailor; and "Francesca", as she now called herself, was brought back to London. She was discovered to be suffering from venereal disease, and was put on probation. When I saw her, I felt at once that she was already a hopeless case. In spite of every effort to reclaim her, she drifted about from place to place, deteriorating physically and mentally. And a few months ago she died of tuberculosis at the age of eighteen.

Frances' history, like that of most others who swell the records of recidivists, shows clearly the converging influence of two main factors—a difficult temperament and an unfortunate environment. By "temperament" I mean the child's inborn mental constitution. What is inborn can obviously never be removed. One of the girl's schoolmistresses had indeed declared that in her view the child was morally defective and should be certified as such. But to make use of wholesale measures of this kind would clearly be impracticable.

Nevertheless, both teachers and doctors still frequently cling to the old-fashioned notion that an habitual offender must have been endowed at birth with an inherent criminal nature, and that nothing can reform him. Today no psychologist subscribes to Lombroso's celebrated theory of *il reo nato*, the criminal who is born and not made. Nor does any moralist nowadays believe in the ancient philosophical doctrine of an inheritable moral sense, common to all law-abiding individuals, but lacking to a greater or lesser degree in certain exceptional cases. Moral behaviour is the result,

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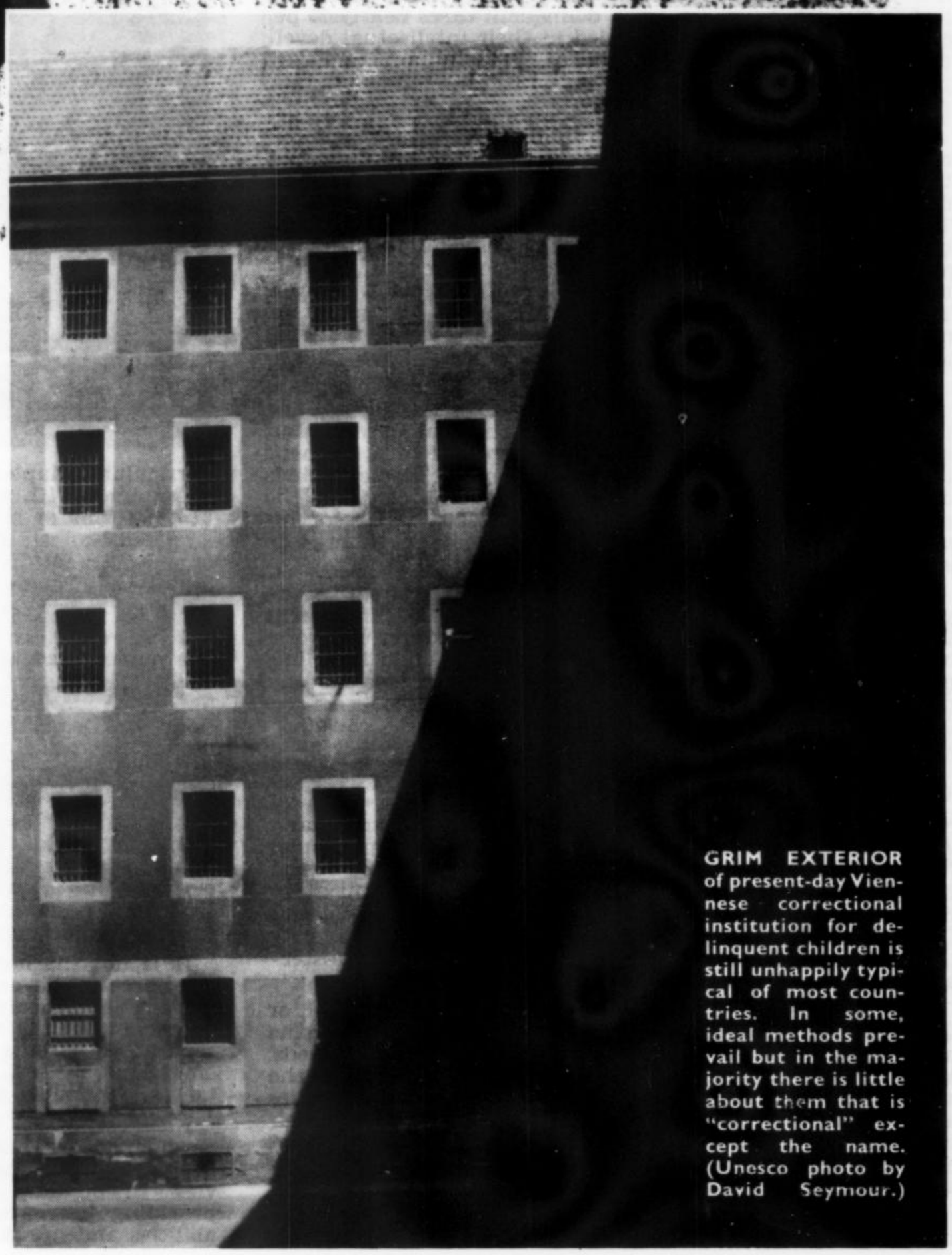
One of the world's foremost authorities on problems of juvenile delinquency, Sir Cyril Burt, is Emeritus Professor of Psychology at the University of London and was formerly Psychologist to the London County Council. He was the first psychologist to be officially appointed by any education authority in the world. His many books include The Young Delinquent *(considered a classic in the field),* The Backward Child *and* The Subnormal Mind.

not of a single or simple innate faculty, but comes from individual experience and social training.

At the same time we are forced to recognize that there are certain temperamental conditions which make it far easier to succumb to temptation. Most juvenile delinquents like Frances, exhibit from the earliest years a marked emotional instability which often runs through all the family. Like the rest of us, they inherit certain specific emotional impulses—anger, fear, sex, and so on; but, unlike the calmer law-abiding citizen, they inherit them with an excessive strength. Sooner or later this highly-strung, ill-balanced disposition is apt to give way under continued strain, and the child breaks down with neurotic disorder or delinquent reactions—frequently both.

Now, what is inborn is only a tendency; and it is by no means inevitable that the tendency should be fulfilled. Because a child inherits a liability to tuberculosis, we cannot assume that he is fated to die of that disease. If the potential neurotic or the potential delinquent is detected at an early age, and suitably protected and cared for, the potentiality itself need never come to maturity.

Emotional characteristics are not the only qualities that are partly determined at birth: our intellectual abilities, both general and special, are also conditioned by our inborn limitations. Differences in general intelligence can be readily measured by standardized tests; and, since it is



GRIM EXTERIOR of present-day Viennese correctional institution for delinquent children is still unhappily typical of most countries. In some, ideal methods prevail but in the majority there is little about them that is "correctional" except the name. (Unesco photo by David Seymour.)

FRANCES *(cont'd)*

An accumulation of many straws

essential to consider how far a child's behaviour is likely to be guided by intelligent or rational motives, his capacities should be assessed at the earliest possible age.

Frances was tested at the age of eleven and found to possess the mental age of an average child of nine. In addition, owing to truancy and inattention, she was more than four years behindhand in her reading and arithmetic. Her bright manner thus concealed an innate incompetence; and in after-life one of the chief reasons why she lost her jobs was that she was really too stupid to perform her work effectively.

Disrupted homes teach bad habits

Her lack of intelligence, however, was not so severe that she could be formally certified as mentally deficient. Yet, had she been tested as soon as she returned to London, and transferred to a school or class for the educationally subnormal, her whole history might have taken a different turn. Unfortunately at that date no facilities existed in her district. Among my own delinquent cases nearly 70 per cent have been seriously retarded in their intellectual development; and it is from the ranks of these dull and backward pupils that the majority of our future delinquents and recidivists are eventually drawn.

Although we cannot alter a child's heredity, we can do much to improve his environment. During early childhood the conditions which chiefly affect his moral and emotional development are those obtaining within his own home. Thirty years ago poverty with its inevitable concomitants—hunger, overcrowding, and lack of space and facilities for play—generally figured as the most conspicuous characteristics of households in which juvenile crime was bred. Today, as every social worker would agree, it is not so much the material conditions as the moral and emotional atmosphere that play the decisive part.

It is comparatively rare for a child who has been brought up from infancy in the midst of a stable, intelligent, and law-abiding family to embark on a criminal career. But when, like Frances, the youngster is deprived of a mother's tender care almost from birth, and when the home itself is disrupted by divorce, separation, or mutual conflict, the child has little or no chance to form steady habits of his own or to acquire a respectful affection for those who should control and watch over him.

But of all the causal factors that are observable in the young delinquent's home, by far the commonest is inefficient discipline. Discipline may be too lax, too severe, or (worst of all) of the forcible-feeble type where the child is at one moment scolded and slapped and at another coaxed and cajoled.

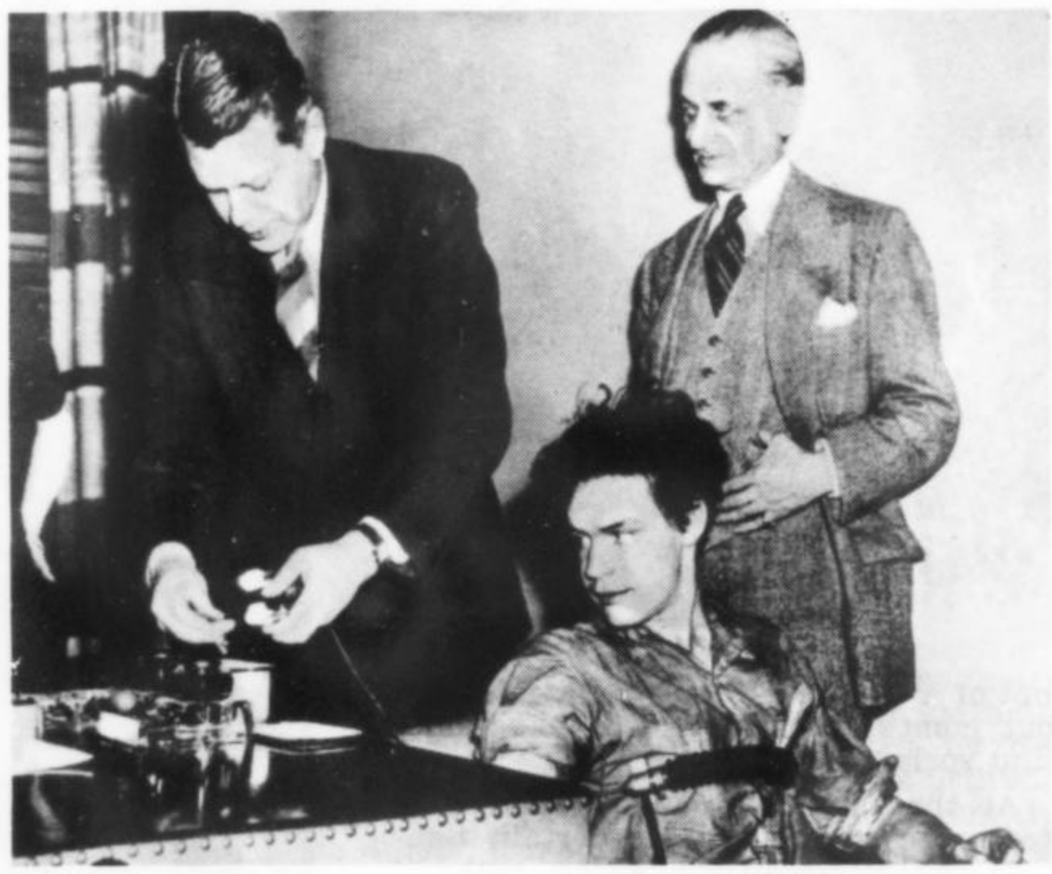
Delay will be disastrous

Much could be done by educating parents—particularly the mothers of the next generation—in the principles of child management. Sometimes this will be out of the question, and the child must be removed. But in every case our motto should be, in the words of *The Children's Charter* : "For every child a home, and that love and security that a home should afford, and for those who need foster-care the nearest substitute for a home of his own".

It is far easier to change the conditions in the school, or to shift the child from a school where he has become maladjusted to one more closely suited to his needs. Moreover, the school offers the readiest link between the supervising authority and the child's immediate relatives and friends. With the English public school as our traditional model, we have gradually come to recognize that education must embrace the training of character as well as the instruction of the intellect.

Transferred to a small class where every child can be studied and taught along individual lines, with a flexible

THE PARENT AND CHILD. At a School for Parents opened in San Francisco, California, to combat juvenile delinquency, parents whose children have committed serious crimes (above) hear court judge lecture as part of mandatory weekly night course. Below, 15 years old delinquent submits to lie detector test. (USIS)



curriculum adapted to the needs of each, the dullard can be supplied with wholesome interests and taught simple yet useful forms of skill, his ill balanced temperament can be adjusted and stabilized, and the restless and high-spirited adventurer can be furnished with outlets for his natural impulses through the medium of games, sport, hobbies, dancing, music, and the more elementary arts and crafts.

To fit the daily work to the capacities of each individual, the pupils must be systematically tested and observed; and their school record cards should include, not only comments on educational progress, but temperamental assessments, notes on behaviour out of school as well as in, and full details regarding the home background.

At the very first sign of irresponsible conduct, appropriate steps must be taken before the actions become ingrained as habits. When ordinary measures are likely to be of no avail, the child should be promptly referred to the child guidance clinic. Delay will be disastrous. In almost every instance, as the story of Frances herself so clearly shows, there is seldom a single cause of crime : a multiplicity of converging factors is nearly always at work.

It is not the last straw, but the accumulation of straws, that breaks the camel's back; and every adverse or demoralizing influence must be detected and if possible removed. Physical health may need attention; bad companions separated; parents aided with prompt advice as each little emergency arises. Above all, the child himself must be tactfully handled and helped.

In most cases, what will be required is not so much psychiatric treatment as moral training—an education or re-education of the child's own misguided impulses, with a view to building up better habits of self-restraint and providing him with loftier ideals suited to his individual abilities and needs.

From the Unesco Newsroom...

AIDING ASIA'S EDUCATORS: An International Institute of Child Study has been set up in Bangkok by the Government of Thailand and Unesco. It will carry out basic research in child development and will equip Asian educators with the background they need to make use of successful educational ideas and methods from other parts of the world in extending and improving their own school systems. The first six staff members—six Thai educators—recently completed a year of special studies in psychology at Toronto University, Canada, under Professor W. Line, Unesco consultant to the Bangkok Institute.

★ **HUMAN RIGHTS' FILMSTRIPS:** *Wales is producing a series of filmstrips for schools to explain the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Prepared by the Welsh Unesco Committee the eight filmstrips deal with early Welsh history, the right to education and freedom of worship, political rights, humanitarianism, science and human welfare and Welsh contributions to human rights and international understanding. Commentaries for use by teachers and adult education groups accompany each filmstrip.*

CHILDREN'S COMMUNITY CLUBS: A far-reaching cultural programme has just been drawn up by El Salvador's Literacy and Adult Education Department. The plan involves setting up a network of recreational clubs across the country. The clubs will function with the help of local parents' associations and will be supervised by trained educators. In these clubs, children will play and work together, and also will learn about the important social problems of their community.

★ **EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY PACT:** *A new international convention now enables students holding a diploma giving access to a university of a member country of the Council of Europe to enter universities in other member countries. The convention came into force after the first three countries—England, Ireland and Denmark—had ratified it.*

'CHAIN REACTION' TEACHING: Students from eighteen Latin American countries, who have graduated from Unesco's Regional Fundamental Education Training Centre at Patzcuaro, Mexico, are now doing valuable work in their own countries on educational projects—often the training of new teachers. Graduates who returned to Honduras, Cuba and Venezuela are working in national centres along similar lines to the one at Patzcuaro. In Costa Rica, five graduates have formed a team that travels throughout the country giving courses for rural teachers. Eight graduates are working for government educational and agricultural projects in Brazil. Several of the Mexican graduates are working with newly-created rural welfare brigades. And graduates from Peru, Guatemala, Honduras and other countries are also at work in their home countries.

★ **PARENTS' UNIVERSITY:** *Members of parents' school committees and workers in trade union children's committees are able to follow six month's study courses in educational questions at a "parents university" in Leningrad. Since the "university" was opened, some 700 parents have completed the course and have since taken an active part in public and social work.*

UNESCO GENERAL CONFERENCE OPENS IN MONTEVIDEO, URUGUAY

Delegates from Unesco's 72 Member States were on hand on November 12 when the Eighth Session of the Unesco General Conference opened in Montevideo, Uruguay. The conference will last four weeks until December 11. Delegates will shape Unesco's future programme and policies. And they will vote on a budget for financing Unesco's activities. The proposed figure is twenty-two million dollars for the two-year period of 1955-1956, but the final figure must be decided by the delegates. This is the first time since Unesco was founded in 1946 that so many nations have been represented at a General Conference. Unesco recently has been strengthened by the adhesion of four new member states: the Soviet Union, Ukraine, Byelorussia and Chile. In addition, Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia all have recently resumed active membership and Rumania and Bulgaria have applied to join.

Among its work, the conference in Montevideo will be considering proposals that Unesco extend greater aid for research and experimentation in the peaceful utilization of atomic energy, research in desert and humid tropical zones, oceanography and marine biology. Proposals also call for the creation of a South Asian centre to study various social problems arising out of recent industrialization. The establishment of an educational film production institute in Latin America and an educational film library for the Middle East is also to be examined.

WORLDS LARGEST TAPESTRY: The largest tapestry ever woven (43 1/2 by 28 1/2 feet) has been presented by Belgium to the United Nations. The tapestry's themes are "Peace, Prosperity and Equality", and views of the chief cities of U.N. Member States line the borders. The work of art was designed by an Antwerp artist, Peter Colfs, after a nation-wide competition. Fourteen artist craftmen put together 94,000 miles of yarn (equal to four times the distance round the equator) to create this huge work, under the direction of Gaspard de Wit of the Royal Belgian Art Factory. Working on a special loom they added an average of two and a quarter miles of yarn to the tapestry every hour. The U.N. Tapestry is to hang on the wall of the U.N. General Assembly Building.

PLASTIC ARTISTS: The International Association of Plastic Arts has just held its first General Assembly. The meeting took place in Venice from September 28 to October 4 and scores of artists from all continents participated. The Association was founded two years ago by an international conference of artists convened by Unesco. Its purpose is to assure cultural co-operation between countries and defend the interests of painters, sculptors, and engravers of all nations.

★ **MEDICINE'S MAGIC EYE:** *Research with new nuclear aids shows that 98% of the basic material in the human body is replaced yearly, according to Dr. Paul Aebersold, Director of the Isotopes Division of the United States Atomic Energy Commission. Studies with radioactive isotopes disprove the old theory that the body takes in food, air and water mainly as a fuel to provide energy. Findings on the body's rate of turnover were revealed by scientifically recording the course of radioactive elements in the human body. (See the special issue of* The Courier, *"The World Within the Atom", December 1953 for an article on radioactive isotopes.)*

THE XMAS SPIRIT: For the sixth consecutive year, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is again selling a series of gay and colourful Christmas cards for the benefit of the world's needy children. The cards carry as their theme "Joy for the World's Children", and show boys and girls at play in Indonesia, Korea, Iran, Austria and Mexico. Last year, UNICEF sold nearly two million cards and netted one hundred thousand dollars, enough to provide powdered milk for seventeen thousand children once a day for a whole year.

★ **THE PEACEFUL USE OF ATOMS:** *The first international scientific research laboratory in the world came into being on September 29 when France and the Federal Republic of Germany simultaneously ratified the Convention setting up an European Organization for Nuclear Research. The Convention, drawn up under Unesco auspices, had already been ratified by seven countries. The European Organization will construct an international laboratory for nuclear research in Geneva and will develop co-operation between existing laboratories in theoretical studies. The research will be of a non-military nature, and its results will be published or made generally available. Director of the Organization will be Swiss scientist Felix Bloch, Nobel Prize Winner, who has directed the Institute of Physics of Stanford University (USA) for many years*

From the Unesco Newsroom... *(Continued)*

UNESCO PACTS SIGNED: Denmark has become the fortieth nation to sign an international convention sponsored by Unesco to protect cultural property in time of war. The convention now awaits ratification by the countries who signed it. The same number of countries have now signed another Unesco-sponsored agreement—the Universal Copyright Convention—and in October, Spain became the third country to ratify that agreement. The Universal Copyright Convention goes into effect as soon as twelve nations officially ratify it.

★ **REFUGEE TRAINEES** : *Over a hundred young Arab refugees have been taken out of the routine of camp life and are being trained at a modern vocational training centre just outside ancient Jerusalem. The centre was established by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees, with help from the International Labour Organization and Unesco. The Relief and Works Agency is caring for almost a half-million Palestine refugees in Jordan alone. It is trying to open new horizons for these men and women who to-day have no way of earning their own livelihood. The young men at the vocational training centre are learning to become radio mechanics, electricians, machinists, plumbers, carpenters and welders. When they graduate, they will be helping to overcome Jordan's serious shortage for skilled workers. The centre hopes to train at least six hundred young Arab refugees during the next three years.*

WOMEN'S RIGHTS: Hungary recently became the fifteenth country to sign the United Nations Convention on the Political Rights of Women since it went into force on July 7, 1954. The Pact grants women the right to vote, to be elected to public office and to exercise all public functions on equal terms with men. It was on July 7, sixty-one years ago that a national ballot was cast by a woman for the first time, in New Zealand.

★ **SCHOOLS ADOPT FARMS** :*Geography and nature study lessons have taken on a new meaning in secondary schools at Birmingham, England, since the children began to "adopt" farms in nearby counties. The time spent at work on the farms by the "farm study groups", the follow-up work in the classroom and the exchange of letters between children and farm families provide a practical lesson in "citizenship"—the training for community living in its widest sense.*

UNITED NATIONS DAY AROUND THE WORLD

On October 24—United Nations Day—the UN flag waved over national capitals, towns and even villages all over the world as men, women and children of all races celebrated the United Nations' ninth birthday. In Liberia, post offices put on sale a new series of Liberian stamps honouring the United Nations. Churches throughout the country held services calling for world peace. Public demonstrations included a parade of the flags of UN member states through the main streets of the capital. Australia and the Philippines decided to make their celebrations a United Nations Week. Burma arranged film shows, public lectures and photo exhibits, and India sponsored a wide variety of events, radio broadcasts, a new postage stamp, exhibitions, leaflets and celebrations in the schools.

In Pakistan, schools and universities arranged special programmes, and there were exhibitions, pageants and flag-raising ceremonies. Children in Thailand, Colombia and the Scandinavian countries celebrated wilth folk-dancing and singing. In the Soviet Union, UN leaflets and posters were widely distributed and publications of the UN and the Specialized Agencies exhibited.

UN Day in Medellin, Colombia, was marked by the opening of the country's first modern public library, a ceremony at which Dr. Luther Evans, Director-General of Unesco officiated. The new library is a Unesco pilot project designed to encourage public library development in Latin America. It will be the first in the country to lend books for home reading. Apart from its initial collection of ten thousand books—which soon will grow to fifty thousand—the new library also has a sizeable record collection and many pictures and filmstrips. It will operate in close conjunction with local adult education work.

In Great Britain, the UN Day activities included displays in shop windows, a great children's gala and special radio and television features. A large UN poster was displayed on ten thousand outdoor advertising sites. Mexico held a national essay and poster contest, and the prizes will be distributed on December 10, Human Rights Day. In the United States which celebrated UN Day in a wide variety of ways, a special committee chose as the theme for this year's ceremonies: "The UN depends on you."

The UN flag flew over towns in all parts of France, and in Marseilles, a giant illuminated banner shone out over the Old Port, proclaiming "Journée des Nations Unies." In Paris and other cities, schoolchildren saw special film programmes or visited UN exhibitions. UN programmes were presented on radio and television.

These were just a few of the many UN Day celebrations. Every land honoured the birthday according to its own national characteristics, its history and its culture. But everywhere prevailed the same hope that the United Nations will help win the battle for a lasting peace.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

EDITORS NOTE. — *In previous issues, the* Unesco Courrier *has devoted considerable space, in this column, to letters from readers on various aspects of auxiliary international languages, such as Esperanto, Ido, Interlingua, Volapuk, etc. Letters from readers in every continent and in almost every country in the world continue to arrive at our editorial offices in Paris in increasing numbers. The Editors wish to take this occasion to express their thanks to all our correspondents for their interesting remarks and comments, but regret that the huge volume of letters makes it impossible to reply personally to each correspondent. However, all letters have been carefully studied by the responsible officials at Unesco prior to the opening of the General Conference of Unesco in Montevideo, Uruguay. At this conference the question of Esperanto and international auxiliary languages are being examined.*

Sir,

As I read the article on "The Flag with the Blue and White Shield" (issue n° 7 — Saving Our Heritage in Stone) and saw the photos of Samothrace Packed Away, it all brought back to me one of the most moving stories I ever heard.

Shortly after the 1945 Armistice I was in the Louvre staring up at the Winged Victory. I was thrilled to find this old friend right back where she belonged, at the top of her majestic stairway, ready to welcome the world *chez elle.*

I turned to a guard standing nearby and smiled gratefully. He, in turn, nodded understandingly, walked slowly up to me and, with deep emotion, confided in me.

"Oh. monsieur ! what would you have felt if you had been in my place at the outbreak of war, the day they took 'her' off for safe-keeping ? For days they hammered away. Boards, machinery, pulleys, and such noise! Imagine, we got so used to this fuss and bother that we didn't pay any more attention to it. Not like the first few days when they took out la *Vénus* and then la *Joconde.* Well, before we knew what was happening, it was all over. She was being carefully lowered down the stairway, dispossessed, taken away from us. Now what would become of her? Who would defend her? Where would they hide her ? And for how long ?... Quite suddenly, yes instinctively, the workers and we guards all stopped in our tracks and stared with disbelief at this new disappearance. We took off our hats and bent our heads in mourning, the better to hide our tears... Believe me, monsieur, we felt that the flag of France was being withdrawn..."

Laurelton, N. Y., U.S.A. **Maurice Kurtz**

Sir,

I congratulate you on the American Negro issue of the *Unesco Courier* (N° 6 of 1954). It is the sort of thing that gives one some hope for the future of the world.

You must realize that the question of elimination of race-prejudice and race-discrimination is one of the fundamental questions on the basis of which we are going to judge the sincerity and honesty of the whites. What is happening in South Africa, Kenya and other African regions in the possession of whites is so exasperating and discouraging to the non-whites in this world that the present issue of *The Courier* is a ray of hope...

Fergusson College, Poona, India. **Dr. D.D. Karve**

Sir,

This summer I came across two copies of *The Unesco Courier.* What, I think, really distinguishes it from other reviews and magazines is the spirit which inspires it. It does not limit its coverage to "superficial" or just picturesque facts about peoples from many lands, but presents precise and vivid information on *what is being done* to give help, culturally and economically, to people who need it. Reading this publication I could sense a great current of effective brotherhood flowing from a great many hearts filled with goodwill

...In the issue of the Courier I have in front of me there appeared "A Letter to Jennifer", in which an American father tells his daughter about Unesco.. I must admit, though I blush to do so, that this was the first time that I understood and really "felt" what Unesco is, and how much we need it to protect the human values which we still — yes, still — prize today.

Basel, Switzerland. **J.B.**

Editor's Note. — *The above letter was originally published in the letter column of the co-operative weekly "Co-operation", in Basel, Switzerland.*

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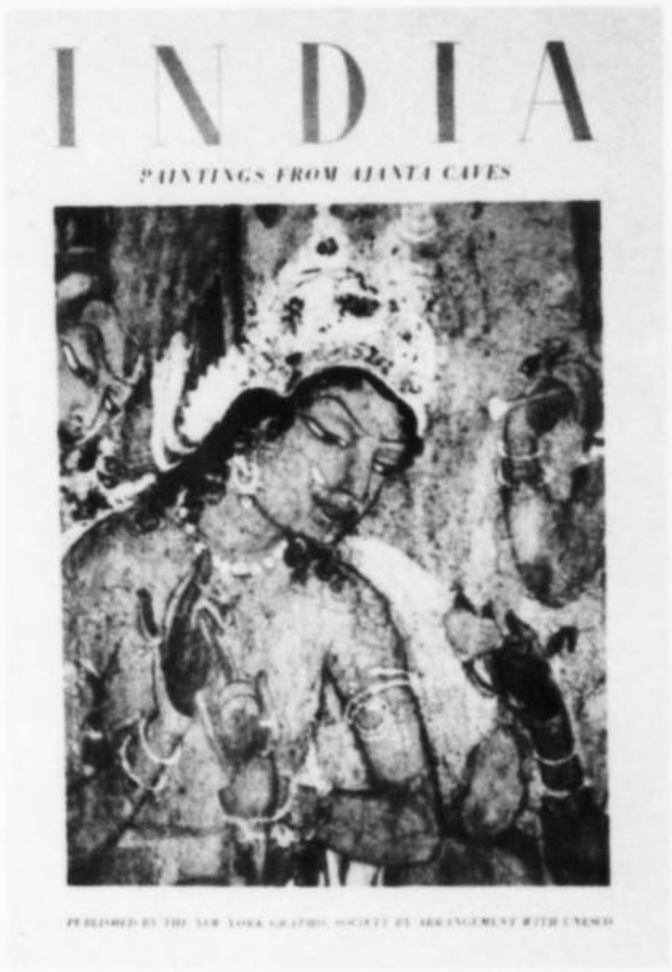

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(See story page 25)